

# Alameda Creek Fisheries Restoration Workgroup

## Minutes of Meeting

September 24, 2003

Alameda County Public Works Agency

### Attendees

Pete Alexander	EBRPD
Gordon Becker	CEMAR
Brenda Buxton	State Coastal Conservancy
Eric Cartwright	ACWD
Laurel Collins	ACFCWCD consultant
Chris Gray	Supervisor Haggerty's Office
Andy Gunther	CEMAR
Craig Hill	ACWD
Laura Kilgour	ACFCWCD
Jay Kinberger	U.S. Army Corps
Kirsten Leising	Watershed Sciences
Jeff Miller	ACA
Josh Milstein	SFPUC
Stuart Moock	PG&E
Diedra Pell	SFPUC
Brian Sak	SFPUC
Gary Stern	NOAA Fisheries
Jenn Stoltz	SFPUC
Saskia van Gendt	CEMAR
Richard Wetzig	ACFCWCD
Rich Zamino	ACA

### **Announcements**

Jeff Miller announced that comments can be submitted to the Alameda County Planning Commission until October 6 regarding the Apperson Ridge quarry project. He also announced a public hearing regarding the EBRPD land use plan for Sunol/Ohlone on October 8 from 7-9 p.m. Written comments will be accepted until October 31.

Eric Cartwright announced that ACWD received a Notice of Preparation for a Union City project involving railroad corridor improvements. The project may include altering the railroad bridge at the BART weir, and will be investigated prior to the next Workgroup meeting.

Gordon Becker announced that DFG is undergoing layoffs that may result in less staff availability at Workgroup meetings.

### **Updates**

*Levee Reconfiguration.* Richard Wetzig said that URS is conducting studies related to hydrology/hydraulics, wildlife, fish, and habitat in the salt pond areas. The project is not in a state of development where its potential impact on Alameda Creek fisheries can be examined.

*SFPUC Activities.* Josh Milstein told the Workgroup that an RFP for the Programmatic EIR for the CIP is being released. Also, the Joint Federal Permitting Office concept is advancing to coordinate agency review of SFPUC projects. Josh is suggesting to PUC management that an interim operations plan be established for Calaveras that would allow the PUC to support moving steelhead into the watershed after Sunol/Niles removals, but before Calaveras reconstruction. Such a plan is likely to include a recapture facility.

*§1135 Process.* Jay Kinberger said that he acquired funds to support some Hydrology and Hydraulics (H&H) tasks. He will request between \$150,000 and \$250,000 in next year's budget to perform §1135-related work. Jay intends to delay issuing a contract for the project EIS until early 2005, when alternatives will be further developed. Jay requested a meeting of Workgroup members that have extensive knowledge of agency coordination, and environmental and H&H information to be used in Corps documentation. Richard Wetzig will coordinate attendance at the meeting.

## **Agenda Items**

*Union City Sanitary District pipeline crossing.* Richard Wetzig reported that the sanitary district has hired WRECO, an engineering firm in Walnut Creek that specializes in scour analysis, to look at channel stability at the crossing in the wake of a July 29 meeting with interested agency staff. Both siphon-type and above-ground structures appear to have obstacles making them less desirable for carrying sewage.

*Re-graded channel alternative study.* Gordon Becker said that the HEC-RAS model that analyzes hydrologic conditions in the vicinity of the BART weir was complete and running. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee for the project will be contacted shortly to schedule a meeting to discuss the study approach. The meeting will occur in the first part of November at the Coastal Conservancy offices.

*In-migrant study.* Gordon reported that CEMAR had submitted a grant application to Patagonia for a webcam to assist with monitoring steelhead at the BART weir. In response to DFG concerns, the images from these cameras will be accessible by password only. A release location in Stonybrook Creek also has been determined. ACFCWCD hopes to have a program in place to move in-migrants as soon as this winter. A meeting to discuss possible approaches to take authorization was scheduled for October 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. at ACFCWCD. Gordon will distribute a memo describing the study plan prior to the meeting.

*Conceptual Engineering Report for the Sunol and Niles Dam removal project.* Gary Stern reported that there was conflicting information concerning the removal design from the conceptual engineering report. Because of the relative newness of dam removal as a discipline, he has recommended convening a panel to discuss design considerations. A conference call is scheduled to determine if a workshop will be necessary.

*Stonybrook Creek improvements conceptual design project.* Gordon said that funding appeared to be in place to conduct a comprehensive conceptual design project. Brenda Buxton will take this project to the Conservancy board in December. If the funding is approved, the project will begin late December or early January. Chris Gray offered to assist with the landowner cooperation element of the project.

*Funding status.* CEMAR contacted Eric Schmidt of NOAA Fisheries prior to the Workgroup meeting for an update on the Bay Bridge mitigation fund. Eric said that there still is no date set for RFP issuance, although approval could happen at any time.

Andy Gunther said that two Alameda Creek projects had advanced in the joint CALFED/Prop 13 grant process, and that the proposal for these projects is being prepared in cooperation with State Board staff. ACWD, CEMAR and CH2MHill are developing the proposal, which is expected to have a high probability of success. The projects consist of a fish screen at the upper inflatable dam and a pipeline that will allow water to be moved from recharge ponds north of the creek to recharge ponds south of the creek. The project includes removal of the lower inflatable dam, as the pipeline will replace it. Due to the interconnectedness of the facilities, these elements will be described as a single, necessary project. February notification is planned, with construction completed by February 2007.

*Other items.* Gary Stern noted that Zone 7 is proceeding with an inflatable dam on Arroyo Mocho in 2004, which will divert water into quarries (Lake H and I). A permit will possibly be issued in early October for a temporary dam, while the permanent facility is still under design. Diversion will only occur when Arroyo Mocho flow is 1 cfs or less.

*Next Workgroup Meeting.* The next meeting of the Workgroup is scheduled for Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 a.m. at ACFCWCD. A summary of progress on the in-migrant study design will be provided, as well as updates on PUC planning issues, the Re-graded Channel Alternative study, and the Union City Sanitary District project. Workgroup members are invited to submit additional agenda topics to CEMAR for inclusion in the agenda, which will be circulated prior to the meeting.