

**Grants Subgroup
Alameda Creek Fisheries Restoration Workgroup**

**Minutes of Meeting on
April 5, 2004**

Attendees:

Gordon Becker, CEMAR
Brenda Buxton, SCC
Eric Cartwright, ACWD
Erika Cleugh, DFG
Craig Hill, ACWD
Laura Kilgour, ACFCWCD
Jane Lavelle, SFPUC
Carla Schulteis, ACFCWCD

Discussion Items

This meeting of the Grants subgroup focused on strategies to maintain progress toward implementing fish passage improvement projects in the flood control channel section of Alameda Creek. The recent announcement by the Corps regarding suspension of work on the §1135 process, as well as the denial of grant funding for a project by the State Board/CalFed, suggested a meeting to gain agreement on what projects to undertake next and how to fund them.

The subgroup speculated that future CalFed funding for Alameda Creek projects is not likely to be forthcoming, and that the Corps remained a viable source of support. The group agreed to produce a letter to the Corps requesting that it authorize a “wrap up” step and continued tracking of our plans and projects. A draft of this letter will be discussed at the next full Workgroup meeting.

Brenda Buxton noted that the Conservancy may be able to contribute to funding of design and environmental review projects for fishery restoration actions. The Conservancy hopes that advancing these aspects of projects will increase the chances of obtaining construction funding. Also, Brenda noted past instances where funders had “credited” efforts of these types as “matching.” She expressed her belief that such funds would be counted in grant application reviews in the future.

Brenda presented a handout (attached) that summarized the likely costs of completing (through construction) the various restoration projects proposed for the flood control channel. She noted the outstanding issue of cost-sharing percentages between ACFCWCD and ACWD that will need to be considered by these agencies. The group recommended that the PAC address this matter in an upcoming meeting. Brenda expects to go to the Conservancy board for approval in the fall, and stated that Conservancy money will need to be spent before the end of 2007.

In a second handout (attached), Brenda showed an outline of the elements of a proposed steelhead restoration program guided by a “Master Plan.” The elements include a stakeholder audit, a flows component, the Master Plan, public presentation materials, environmental review, and final design and construction. The outline suggests a path that allows progress toward restoration goals while awaiting major construction funding from such sources as the Corps and CalTrans. Brenda will continue to develop a scope of work for the Master Plan process in cooperation with a consulting

firm. The subgroup requests that Workgroup members familiar with consultants capable of carrying out the Master Plan process mention the firms' names at the next Workgroup meeting.

Jane Lavelle noted that the SFPUC is starting flows studies, and ACWD staff said the agency is working on a scope of work for related flows studies. Erika Cleugh said that DFG would need to have flows agreements in place with water agencies before DFG could provide funding for construction projects.

The subgroup reiterated that fish screens at the upper inflatable dam should be the targets for the next major grant proposal. Both ACFCWCD and ACWD indicated that major outside funding sources would be necessary to take major restoration projects through to completion. Craig Hill relayed ACWD's desire that the agency be highly involved with design considerations to ensure that water supply factors are thoroughly addressed.

Background Information for Estimating Design and Environmental Review Cost

Drawing from information put together by ACWD (and its consultant CH2MHill) and the Center for Ecosystem Management and Restoration (CEMAR), Conservancy staff estimates that the design, permits, and CEQA/NEPA analysis for the fish passage project would cost \$1,085,000 (see Charts #1 and #2 below). There may be significant cost savings from combining all the project elements into one project, or from conceptual design work done to date, but \$1,085,000 is a prudent number. The Conservancy would contribute up to \$200,000 towards design, leaving a short fall of \$885,000 to be shared by the ACWD and the County. Since over two-thirds of the infrastructure in this project belongs to ACWD, it seems reasonable to assume that ACWD would pay a proportional amount of this cost, which would be \$584,000 for ACWD and \$300,900 for the County (see Chart #3 below). There are further details to be discussed, such as what is the exact percentage each party would pay, how much of this work can be completed with agency staff or through existing retainer contracts, etc. For now, the Conservancy assumes this would be the additional cash contribution from each party.

Total Project Costs¹

Chart #1

Project Elements	Design (10%)	Design + Construction	EIR	Or Mit. Neg. Dec	Permits	
Recharge Pit Reconfiguration	190	1,900	50		20	
BART Weir and Middle Inflatable Dam	290	2,900	60		20	
Middle Screens	150	1,500		30		
Upper Inflatable Dam	140	1,400	50		20	
Upper Screens	95	950		30		
	865	8,650	160		60	8,870

Costs for Design, Permits, CEQA (Pre-Construction Phase)

Chart #2

Design	865
EIR	160
Permits	60
Total Pre-Construction Phase	1,085
Conservancy contribution	200
Funding Gap	885

¹ All costs for all charts in thousands of dollars

Design costs divided by responsible party Chart #3

(Illustrative purposes only – amounts to be negotiated between ACWD and County).

ACWD	County
575	290
100	60
40	20
715	370
66%	34%
After Conservancy contribution	
584.1	300.9

Next Phase of Work for Alameda Creek Fish Passage Project

To summarize, here is a more detailed outline of the Conservancy's proposal including a list of parties responsible for paying for each element (in parenthesis):

1. Create a "Master Plan" as agreed by the Fisheries Work Group. This document would undertake the tasks outlined in CEMAR's proposal and would include the following elements (Conservancy's total contribution to Master Plan would not exceed \$150,000):
 - a. Stakeholder audit to establish restoration goals and objectives and assess institutional capacities and structures (e.g. creation of JPA). (*Alameda County: existing CEMAR contract.*)
 - b. Water Agencies work with Resource Agencies (NOAA Fisheries & DFG) to create water flow regimes that allow for fish passage and rearing. (*ACWD, SF PUC, Zone 7 assume costs for studies, modeling, and other analysis required for water flow-related decisions.*)
 - c. Prepare a document that integrates the Restoration Action Plan with conclusions reached on water flows and lists additional fisheries habitat improvement projects in watershed. (*SCC*)
 - d. Create a GIS database and public presentation (including web-based) materials of fish passage and habitat projects. (*SCC, as funding permits*)
 - e. CEQA review of Master Plan, if necessary. (*SCC*)
2. Select the most desired alternative for fish passage over the BART weir. (*All, no cost, based on SCC "Re-grade" study and ACWD/County funded designs*)
3. Complete final design & engineering, permits, and CEQA/NEPA review for fish passage project. (*SCC, ACWD, County, per proposal outlined in attachment A.*)
4. Undertake an outreach program that targets key decision-makers and informs them of the Alameda Creek restoration project. (*All, low costs*)
5. Seek funding for construction of priority fish restoration projects. This will include:
 - a. Seeking language in the next WRDA (scheduled for '06) to allow the project partners to receive credit for work completed on project design as part of their local match. (*All, could involve DC travel costs.*)
 - b. Commitments from involved agencies for matching funds.
 - c. Seek grants from other agencies, e.g. CalFed, CalTrans mitigation funds, etc. (*All*)