

ATTACHMENT E

Meeting Notes

San Pablo Baylands /State Route 37 Planning Meeting

June 19, 2017

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Ralph Benson Baylands Center

2100 Sears Point Road, Sonoma

- A. **Meeting Purpose:** Discuss a unified, multi-organization approach to create San Pablo Baylands restoration recommendations associated with potential State Route (SR) / Highway 37 Corridor Changes
- B. **Introductions and Agenda Review** (Facilitator – Dave Ceppos, Associate Director, Center for Collaborative Policy)
- C. **Attendees:** Refer to attached list for meeting participants and affiliations
- D. **Meeting Purpose Introduction** – (Julian Meisler, Baylands Program Manager, Sonoma Land Trust)
 - 1. Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) began working on marsh restoration in the Sonoma Baylands in the 1980s. Today, we face many new challenges, some unanticipated in the '80s, including sea level rise (SLR), salt water intrusion and SR 37.
 - 2. Why this meeting now?
 - a. Flooding and closure of the highway last winter brought the issue of SLR into the forefront of the local political discourse, creating urgency for design and construction of SR 37 to increase its capacity and protect it from sea level rise.
 - b. The current SR 37 redesign process provides an opportunity to design and implement an integrated project to meet both infrastructure and ecological goals.
 - 3. Recent related activities
 - a. UC Davis and Caltrans stakeholder process to envision future scenarios for SR 37 (2011-2016)
 - I. Demonstrated process to integrate SR 37 infrastructure planning with ecological protection and restoration. Stakeholder-driven process yielded several alternative SR 37 designs that would accommodate sea level rise and promote ecological restoration.
 - II. Caltrans acknowledged that funding for the SR 37 corridor will not likely be available until 2088.
 - III. link to the UC Davis/Road Ecology Website with documentation and reporting that was generated from this effort: <http://hwy37.ucdavis.edu/resources>

- b. United Bridge Partners, a private toll road company, presented a proposal to privatize SR 37 and construct a toll road within 8 to 10 years. Implementation of this plan would require a Joint Powers Agreement among the 4 counties; such an agreement is under discussion.
- c. SR 37 Policy Committee
 - I. In December 2015, the Congestion Management Agencies of Marin, Napa, Solano and Sonoma Counties formed a partnership to “develop expedited funding, financing and project implementation strategy for the reconstruction of SR 37 to withstand rising seas and storm surges while improving mobility and safety along the route” (<http://scta.ca.gov/projects/highway37/>). MTC contracted with a consulting firm to complete a Design Alternatives Analysis (DAA), which will be complete by January 2018.
 - II. Links to the DAA scope and schedule: <http://scta.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/5a-Tran-SLR-Cooridor-Improve-MTCDAAs-Scope.pdf>, and starting at page 67 of this document http://scta.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SR-37-Policy-Packet_11-03-16.pdf
- d. Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) is receptive to integrating designs for ecological restoration into the SR 37 design and seeking guidance from the conservation community.
- e. Solano Transportation Authority is reportedly interested in serving as lead agency on the CEQA review.

E. Facilitated Discussion

1. Developing Regional Habitat Goals for San Pablo Bay that can be integrated with the design for SR 37.
 - a. Examples include the Sears Point Wetland Restoration Project, Flood Control 2.0 (San Francisco Estuary Institute), and the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge Climate Adaptation Plan (2016) (<https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/san-pablo-bay-national-wildlife-refuge-climate-adaptation-plan>).
 - b. Additional resources were noted: including the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture (SFBJV) Implementation Plan (update underway) and San Francisco Bay Project Tracking (SFEI).
2. Discussion of potential work product — for regional-scale San Pablo Bay habitat goals
 - a. Process for integrating with the SR 37 redesign.
 - I. Approach the work as a multi-benefit project that is designed to enhance and restore tidal marsh habitat, plan for sea level rise, as well as address transportation needs for the region.
 - II. Coordinate with the DAA process and stakeholders (elected officials, transportation agencies, MTC, engineers, etc.) in order to promote multi-benefit project and integrate designs into DAA process.
 - b. Develop a landscape vision for the San Pablo Baylands
 - I. Lay out a plan for adaptive restoration, designed to allow for marsh migration.

- II. Broaden the scope to consider the impacts of SLR not only on the highway, but on working lands, other infrastructure, water resources, existing marshes, etc.
 - III. Comply with state-wide guidance for natural resources considerations and integration. During the UC Davis / Caltrans process, SLR predictions were optimistic. New SLR data and a longer planning horizon might change the cost-benefit ratio of building a levee versus the other alternatives.
- c. Evaluate impact of alternate SR 37 designs (levee-top, causeway, bridge, etc.) on existing and future marsh development and persistence.
 - I. Environmental Impact of SR 37 project: seek to avoid or minimize impacts by incorporating restoration into the design.
 - II. A cost specialist should be included in the process
 - III. Inserting design goals for habitat restoration upfront will avoid the circular process of road design, environmental review, and redesign to avoid environmental impacts.
 - IV. Including the ecosystem services provided by a well-functioning marsh ecosystem into the overall project cost would make alternatives to a levee design more competitive.
 - V. Important and costly role of private landowners in keeping 37 dry via operation of stormwater pumps should be taken into account.
3. Stakeholders
- a. Regulatory agencies: Caltrans; USFWS; CDFW; Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board; San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission; and others
 - b. Public: The highway is the vital transportation link in the North Bay, congestion and flooding impacts the region's economy. Acknowledge balance of economic and environmental interests.
 - c. Elected officials: local, state and federal representatives.
4. Potential funding for development of a plan
- a. Caltrans mitigation funds delivered up-front possible but could preclude eligibility for grant funds.
 - b. State grant funds: Proposition 1, Measure AA. Work associated with mitigation is not eligible. Need to clarify if mitigation and bond funds can be pooled and applied toward project.
 - c. Regional Advance Mitigation Program (RAMP) – State Coastal Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy and Caltrans. Investigate relevance of current RAMP development to this project.
 - d. Resilient By Design (RBD)
 - I. Group discussion about the relevance between RBD and this San Pablo Baylands opportunity. A general sense prevailed (as addressed below in the "Next Steps / Decisions Made" section) that focused work by this group and others could be a viable "site" for the RBD process but that the focus should be on SR 37 next steps with an

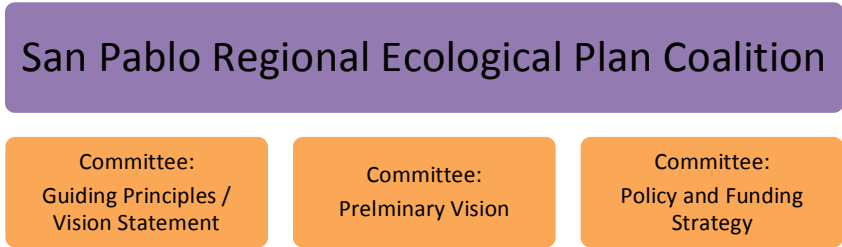
interest to integrate into the RBD process if deemed feasible and if appropriate advocates / partners step forward. Concern expressed that RBD might impose constraints related to timeline, funding, ability for broad participation.

5. Timeline

- a. DAA process:
 - I. Fall 2017: Policy Committee will finalize the alternative development for the “priority segment” of SR 37. (See links to DAA scope and schedule above.)
 - II. Fall 2018: CEQA will be initiated, contingent on funding availability.
- b. San Pablo Bay Regional plan process:
 - I. Goal is to prepare a comprehensive alternative that can be included in CEQA analysis.
 - II. Window of time is 18-24 months to provide a viable alternative to the DAA process and Policy Committee.

6. Decisions Made and Next Steps

- a. Potential framework includes broad coalition and 3 committees as depicted below.



- b. Committee structure, leadership, tasks, and timelines are below. Committees will work collaboratively with each other, coalition will convene regularly to coordinate, share information and advance strategy.

Guiding Principles / Vision Statement Committee

Time Frame: Now to end of July

Work Products / Outcomes:

- i. Key statements about guiding principles and mutual interests to create a shared message for the group to work with, and for others in the transportation community to resonate with.
- ii. RBD – If feasible and appropriate, guiding principles may be used to inform a mid-July target date for RBD submittal of proposed “sites”. While not the focus of this Committee, this option will be retained and revisited as work continues.

Group Leader: Jessica Davenport

Members: Michelle Orr, Sam Veloz, Justin Bodell, Julian Meisler, Robin Grossinger, Melissa Amato, Beth Huning, Renee Spent, Jeremy Lowe, John Takekawa

Preliminary Vision

Time Frame: Beginning of July to end of August

Work Product / Outcomes:

- iii. Informed by the guiding principles
- iv. Specific outcome not certain yet. Initial intent is to include the following
 - Address but do not try to replicate the look / feel of DAA alternatives
 - Present a preliminary vision of the San Pablo Baylands: downscaled and informed by past work (as described above); focusing on an integrated, multi-benefit approach to solve transportation, environmental, hydrologic and SLR challenges / opportunities, reflecting a San Pablo Bay Baylands vision that includes the broad range of impacts and benefits including working lands, economic factors, other infrastructure, etc.
 - Capture and communicate in a well-designed collateral materials

Group Leaders: Robin Grossinger and Jeremy Lowe

Members: Sam Veloz, Jeff Schreiber, Tom Huffman, Fraser Schilling, Julian Meisler, Melissa Amato, Jessica Davenport, Beth Huning, Mark Stacy (UCB), Francesca Demgen, Maya Haydon, Renee Spent, Kendall Webster

Policy and Funding Strategy Committee

Time Frame: Ongoing to end of August and beyond

Work Product / Outcomes:

- i. Develop an initial and long range strategy for political and stakeholder outreach and engagement during and after initial Vision development. Engagement of 4 County Transportation Authorities is essential.
- ii. Identify, secure and publicize funding opportunities in the Preliminary Vision and through other outreach methods

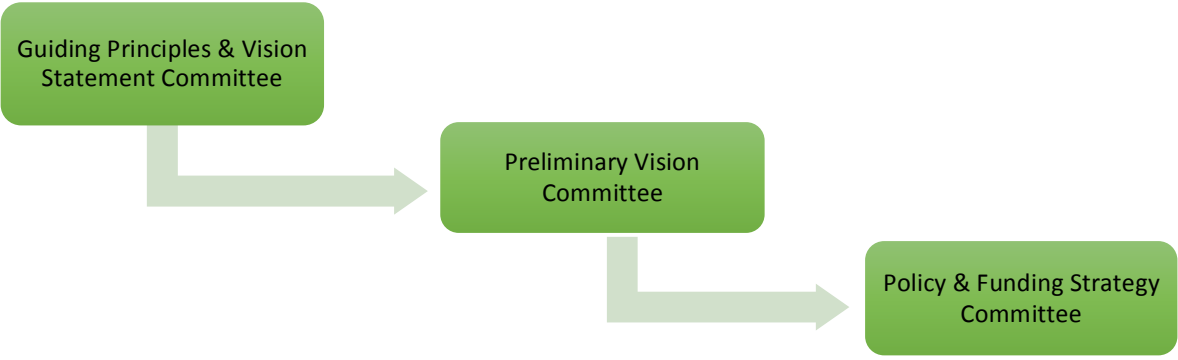
Group Leader: TBD

Members: Wendy Eliot, Barbara Salzman, Dave Koehler, Justin Bodell, Fraser Schilling, Nicole Braddock, Jessica Davenport, Francesca Demgen, Maya Haydon,

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST



LIST OF ATTENDEES

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
John Takekawa	Audubon CA
Peter Perrine	Wildlife Conservation Board
Tom Huffman	CA Department of Fish and Wildlife
Renee Spent	Ducks Unlimited
Michelle Orr	ESA
Fran Demgen	Friends of San Pablo Bay NW Refuge
Barbara Salzman	Marin Audubon
Roger Leventhal	Marin County Flood Control District
Sam Veloz	Point Blue Conservation Science
Maya Hayden	Point Blue Conservation Science
Jeff Schreiber	Sonoma Resource Conservation District
Justin Bodell	Sonoma Resource Conservation District
Bill Keene	Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District (SCAPOS)
Jessica Davenport	State Coastal Conservancy (SCC)
Beth Huning	SF Bay Joint Venture
Jeremy Lowe	SF Estuary Institute
Robin Grossinger	SF Estuary Institute
Dave Koehler	Sonoma Land Trust (SLT)
Julian Meisler	SLT
Kendall Webster	SLT
Nicole Braddock	Solano Land Trust
Susan Haydon	Sonoma County Water Agency (SWCA)
Anne Crealock	SCWA
Fraser Shilling	UC Davis
Anne Morkill	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Don Brubaker	USFWS
Meg Marriot	USFWS
Melissa Amato	USFWS
Dave Ceppos	Center for Collaborative Policy