

**LAGUNITAS CREEK TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)  
Meeting Notes from the November 13, 2020 Meeting**

By Eric Ettliger

**Chair and Vice-Chair Present:** Rob Carson and Sarah Phillips

**Committee Members Present:** Ryan Watanabe, Chester Lindley, Matt Erickson, Ann Thomas, Bree Hardcastle, Terrance Carroll, Todd Steiner, Barbara Salzman, Eric Ettliger, Larry Bragman, Jean Berensmeier, Jonathan Koehler, Jodi Charrier, Mike Reichmuth, Leslie Ferguson, Mike Napolitano, Ayano Hayes, Preston Brown, Phil Sotter, Gordon Bennett, Richard Plant, Chuck Shultz, Steve Tognini, Kristin Drumm

**Other Attendees:** Ben Horenstein, Aaron Fulton, Crystal Yezman, Paul Sellier, and Elysha Irish (MMWD), Teska Hapig-Ward and Logan Anderson (SPAWN), Jason White (Environmental Science Associates)

**Introduction of TAC members**

**Adopt agenda.**

Leslie Ferguson asked for an update on MMWD's Lagunitas Stewardship Plan. Included into Jonathan Koehler's introduction. Agenda adopted.

**1. Approve notes from the June, 2020 TAC meeting.**

Larry Bragman asked that a link to MMWD's fuel reduction plan be shared with the TAC. The notes were approved.

**2. Marin Municipal Water District Introducing Jonathan Koehler**

Jonathan introduced himself. His top priority is updating the Lagunitas Stewardship Plan. He hopes to have a draft completed in March, 2021.

Comments by TAC:

Gordon Bennett asked what the process will be for TAC involvement during development of the Stewardship Plan.

Larry Bragman suggested that the purpose of the TAC was to provide input on management plans such as this.

Ben Horenstein said that MMWD would develop a schedule that incorporates TAC input and feedback so that MMWD's Board will receive a plan supported by the TAC.

Leslie Ferguson said that the TAC had discussed creating a sub-committee to provide input on the plan.

Rob Carson asked interested TAC members to email Sarah and him to be included on a TAC subcommittee.

Subcommittee members: Gordon Bennett (SOS), Leslie Ferguson (RWQCB), Sarah Phillips

(MRCDD), Mike Napolitano SF RWQCB), Preston Brown (SPAWN), Mike Reichmuth (NPS), Chester Lindley (CDFW), Denis Poggio (SGVS), and Jodi Charrier (NMFS).

### 3. Prop 68 Lagunitas Creek Watershed Enhancement Study (Aaron Fulton, MMWD)

MMWD was awarded \$300,000 by CDFW in the spring of 2020. The purpose was to develop a plan that includes 30% enhancement designs for two priority reaches and five to ten sites in Lagunitas and San Geronimo Creeks. MMWD will hire ESA to review the literature, summarize geomorphic conditions, and create a basis of design report. The grant application specified at least five occasions for the TAC to provide input on the planning process.

#### Comments by TAC:

Jean Berensmeier asked for more specificity on locations within the San Geronimo Valley. Aaron said MMWD would focus on District-owned parcels and other parcels where landowners have already expressed interest in restoration.

Leslie Ferguson suggested a subcommittee similar to what was convened in the Napa Valley that participates at the 0% design phase and in contrast to the process that occurred during the 319h project review. Aaron supported the TAC's early involvement, whether as a subcommittee or some other process.

Rob Carson asked when group field visits would start. Aaron expected that phase of the project to begin in early 2021.

Sarah Phillips suggested that TAC members contact her to request involvement in the two subcommittees on the Stewardship Plan and Enhancement Plan.

Jonathan Koehler pointed out that a large group would be difficult to bring into the field safely with social distancing. Leslie responded that a virtual meeting would be acceptable to discuss broad-scale priorities.

Mike Reichmuth asked when this project would be completed. Aaron responded that the grant covers three years.

Barbara Salzman supported the TAC's early involvement and asked how much of San Geronimo Creek is publicly owned and how much is being considered for restoration. Aaron responded that >70% of the creek would not be included.

Matt Erickson asked if landowners such as the San Geronimo Land Trust would be included. Aaron said that adjacency of willing partners would factor into site selection.

Todd Steiner pointed out that SPAWN owns a parcel adjacent to MMWD land and should coordinate with MMWD on this project.

Leslie Ferguson asked that project goals be very clear and based on the most recent data.

Subcommittee members: Gordon Bennett (SOS), Leslie Ferguson (RWQCB), Sarah Phillips (MRCDD), Mike Napolitano SF RWQCB), Bree Hardcastle (State Parks), Phil Sotter (SGVPG), Jean Berensmeier (SGVPG), Steve Tognini (SGVS), and Jodi Charrier (NMFS).

#### 4. CDFW North Coast Salmon Project (Chester Lindley)

CDFW has identified four priority watersheds: Lagunitas Creek, the Russian River, the Mendocino coast, and the South Fork of the Eel River. A main focus is reducing regulatory bottlenecks that may be slowing restoration work. Project staff surveyed restoration professionals on positive and negative experiences with the permitting process. A second goal, in collaboration with NOAA, is fine-scale habitat restoration. The SHARP process from the Eel River may be reproduced in Lagunitas Creek. The Project also aims to collect and make available planning documents and monitoring data.

#### 5. Updates

##### a. 2020 Juvenile Surveys – Draft Results (MMWD and NPS)

Eric Ettlinger reported that the preliminary juvenile coho estimate for Lagunitas Creek was roughly 22,000, which represents over 300 juveniles produced per redd. This was the highest egg-to-fry survival rate on record. Low winter and spring flows likely resulted in excellent conditions for egg incubation and early fry emergence. Eric also forecast between 200 and 750 adult coho would return in 2020-21. Anecdotal reports of high rates of coho bycatch in Tomales Bay offers hope for a large coho run.

Mike Reichmuth estimated a population of approximately 500 juvenile coho in Olema Creek. This was slightly higher than three years ago. NPS surveys were hampered by fire and smoke in 2020. In Redwood Creek the estimate was roughly 100 juvenile coho salmon, which was very disappointing.

Mike also reported that NPS lost CDFW monitoring funding and can't rely on volunteers due to COVID restrictions.

##### Comments by TAC:

Gordon Bennett asked about survival of coho caught in Tomales Bay and whether CDFW regulates coho bycatch. Richard Plant answered that CDFW only regulates fish brought to the dock. Chester Lindley said that CDFW also educates anglers about proper ways to release salmon. Richard pointed out that it can be difficult to differentiate coho and Chinook and coho may be accidentally kept. Gordon asked for this to be discussed in greater depth at a future TAC.

Mike Napolitano offered two WSP members to assist with Olema Creek fish surveys.

Sarah Phillips offered to help NPS with salmon surveys.

##### b. Project Updates – Roy's Pools & Private Property Project (SPAWN)

Preston Brown presented the current status of Roy's Pools, including some time-lapse videos of the demolition of the fish ladder and jump pools and placement of rock. The design incorporates a persistent, sinuous, low-flow channel as well as more mobile rock. Planting the banks is ongoing. A more detailed presentation will be provided in January.

Preston also presented on a project covering a roughly 500' reach that aims to increase fish cover and spawning habitat by increasing wood and coarse bedload while reducing bank erosion. The project placed 54 pieces of wood that will trap coarse bedload.

A third, smaller project, was the creation of a pollinator garden at the Lagunitas School.

Comments by TAC:

Leslie Ferguson asked for an update at the January meeting on how Roy's Riffle may respond to stochastic events like wildfire and landslides. She complimented SPAWN on another impressive restoration project.

Gordon Bennett suggested a letter of appreciation to the participating landowners.

**c. Lagunitas Flow Activation Study (SPAWN)**

Preston said they were currently validating modeled flows and water elevations. He will share those results with the TAC.

**d. Japanese Knotweed (MKAT/Sarah Phillips)**

Sarah passed along Anna Dirkse's update on knotweed management. Of the 70 sites treated in 2019, 24 sites had no visible stems, while 46 sites had reduced stem counts. Six new sites were found in 2020. All but three of the 52 sites were treated in 2020. Sarah showed photos of selected treatment sites.

Comments by TAC:

In response to a question from Larry Bragman, Sarah said that knotweed is being treated with a mixture of Glyphosate and Imazapyr and provided a link to MKAT's frequently asked questions page.

**6. Reports by TAC members**

Matt Erickson reported that FRGP recipients will be announced by mid-December.

Bree Hardcastle reported on a 17-acre fire in Samuel P. Taylor.

Barbara Salzman asked for a map of current projects in the watershed at the next meeting.

Ben Horenstein concurred and suggested that MMWD could do that at some point.

Sarah Phillips briefly described an assessment project underway on lower Walker Creek.

Sarah passed along information from NOAA. They're updating the Species in the Spotlight Action Plan for Coho Salmon and writing Biological Opinions for the Mountain View Bridge replacement and Point Reyes' General Management Plan Amendment.

Mike Reichmuth reported that the Woodward Fire rehabilitation is ongoing.

Larry Bragman asked about PFOA chemicals in fire retardants. Rob Carson answered that there is current legislation attempting to eliminate that and similar chemicals. Mike Napolitano commented that the retardants also have a fertilization impact.

Mike Napolitano asked TAC members for help with identifying Tribal members who could participate in Regional Board restoration planning efforts.

Leslie Ferguson commented that the Regional Board generally supported the Point Reyes General Management Plan Amendment, but asked for a report from NPS on the plan.

Preston Brown reported that SPAWN is finding large numbers of freshwater shrimp at their

floodplain enhancement project.

Jean Berensmeier shared her appreciation for the TAC's work and Larry Bragman's participation in particular.

Gordon Bennett commented that CDFW has yet to follow through on actions they said they would take in response to the TAC's concerns on salmon net pens. Rob and Sarah committed to contacting Kevin Shaffer at CDFW. Gordon also asked Richard Plant to work with him on outreach to Tomales Bay anglers.

Chuck Schultz commented that CDFW has good guides for salmon identification and how to release fish.

Rob Carson reported that the Tomales Bay Watershed Council is revising water sampling locations on Walker Creek. The Council also planned to release an RFP for small academic research grants.

## 7. Future Agenda Items

Rob and Sarah polled TAC members on priorities for future agenda items.

### High Priority

- Cumulative Impact Analysis for San Geronimo Creek (Supplemental EIR)
- Coordination between Marin County and Coastal Commission, regulatory hurdles
- MMWD future/updated stewardship plan (MMWD)/Temperature Analysis

### Low Priority

- Redwood Creek and Muir Woods Road bridges
- Marin Local Coastal Plan (Kristin Drumm will present to the TAC when plan is complete)
- Target recovery numbers per species per life stage
- Point Reyes General Management Plan Amendment

### Removed

- Overview of the Coastal Monitoring Plan (CMP)
- CDFW fish release/fish rescue policy
- Mt. View Road Bridge replacement project
- SGV (San Geronimo Valley) Watershed Base Study

## 8. 2021 Lagunitas TAC Meeting Schedule

January 8 (Virtual Field Trip)

March 19

June 11

November 5

### 8a. Action Items

- Share TAC meeting dates (Rob and Sarah)

- Share a link to MMWD's Watershed Committee discussion of fuel reduction (Rob and Sarah)
- Share Roy's Redwoods Project support letter (Rob and Sarah)
- Volunteers for two TAC subcommittees (All)
- Letter of appreciation for landowner participation (Rob and Sarah)
- Share Flow Activation Study Preliminary Results (Preston)
- Map of watershed projects (MMWD)
- Contact Kevin Shaffer about net pen actions (Rob and Sarah)
- Invite a Tribal representative to TAC (Rob and Sarah)
- Outreach materials related to coho bycatch (Gordon and Richard)

#### **9. Public Comment**

Sarah asked for suggestions to make the Virtual Field Trip more social.

#### **Adjournment**