

## MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

### **Climate Action Working Group: October 21, 2016 Mt. Tamalpais Conference Room, 175 N. Redwood Blvd., San Rafael Final Minutes**

Present: Doug Wilson, Pam Reaves, Ed Mainland, Rick Fraitas, Kate Powers, Susan Stompe, Bill Carney, Tamra Peters, Jeff Rhoads, Bob Miller, Belle Cole, Damon Connolly, Pat Nelson, Max Perrey, Nona Dennis.

Doug called the meeting to order at 9:05.

#### **Brief Introductions**

**September minutes.** Minutes were approved without corrections. M/S Pam/Tamra/Approved.

**Adoption of the Agenda by consensus.** The agenda was adopted with the understanding that there might be some variation in the order.

#### **Discussion: Bay Wave Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment**

Doug introduced our presenter, Chris Choo, to give us an update on the BayWAVE Vulnerability Assessment.

Chris described the scope and methodology of the Vulnerability Assessment. It covers the Bay side of the county, from the county line down to the park. Its assessment of vulnerability to sea level rise uses the Point Blue CoSMoS model. They selected six scenarios from the up-to-40 available scenarios. The selected scenarios address near-term, mid-term, and long-term effects. They address sea level rise of 10 inches, 20 inches, and 60 inches, plus storm surge. They consider where the effects take place on the shoreline.

The draft breaks down impacts by community and by assets affected. It is based on LIDAR topography. It reflects interviews with more than 100 asset managers from cities and towns (multiple departments) and agencies over a six-month time period. Assets covered include roads, transportation, buildings, utilities, habitat, emergency services, and others. There are map overlays for boundaries. The draft considers what is in the buildings that will be impacts as well as the subsurface, and what protective measures have already been taken.

They spent the summer writing up interviews. They are now conducting an internal assessment to verify accuracy. The next step is communication to the public.

The draft outlines vulnerability and quantification; it does not propose solutions at this stage. It consists of approximately 200 pages, broken into sections, assets and locations. The assets section is countywide. Now they will start thinking about how to move forward based on this

information. Steps that move us toward what is needed include zoning changes, construction, etc. Next year there will be community meetings to reach out to the public at large, engage them in the discussion.

### **Comments and Questions**

Belle: What is newsworthy and interesting to the public? A. We're used to intermittent flooding, but there are lots of sea-level-rise impacts that will affect everyone and are more permanent. Wetlands will return where we've kept the water out. All major roadways will be affected, as well as sewer districts. It's a regional issue.

Pam: What is the 2100 projection? A. Five feet. Pam: That may change. There are projections of six feet.

Chris (cont): There is work outside of jurisdictional boundaries. Drastic change engages the public. We work together to respond. There are protections that can adapt over time.

Doug: Marin is pioneering. The state is not ready yet. We need help from the state. They don't have legislation for adaptation. A. We are ahead of others. There is lots of attention focused on Marin. For example, the BCDC viewer shows low points and vulnerability, a handful of low points that allow lots of water to come in. They start with Marin because stakeholders are in place. We are talking/collaborating with San Mateo, which is also doing work. The DPW watershed program is working in southern Marin. Novato is working to protect areas behind the levees.

Rick: Is there action on state legislation? A. Our county leadership is looking into this. The State Lands Commission is reclaiming areas under their jurisdiction. There is not a universal level of projections. Impacts on the San Francisco Bay have been lower than in other areas, but this is starting to change. Chris's efforts are local—for example, pushing through permit hurdles. She has been working with Roger Levanthal, and looking into more gently sloping levees to protect the marshes. This is expensive and challenging. They are trying to have Marin be a pilot program—for example, protecting affected endangered species.

Jeff: Are there Irwin or MCF grants for disadvantaged communities? A. Marin always gets a portion. This time is a huge departure for disadvantaged communities. DWR has grants. We submitted an application in collaboration with knowledgeable locals. We are seeking to fund Shore Up Marin.

Chris (cont.): The Game of Floods considers hard engineering and soft engineering/wetlands retreat/zoning measures. It considers solutions based on moving out of the way or not allowing all rebuilding efforts. There is a preservation edition, also one representing an area similar to West Marin. It also looks at what we are not willing to lose, versus restoration. Even the greenest

people see that green measures don't necessarily work in areas that are poorly built. Self interest tends to intervene in setting limits. Building wetlands may be a temporary fix.

Pam: Are county government siloes diminishing? A. Slowly, but yes. Leventhal and Liebster are sharing with DPW, Parks, meeting with multiple city departments.

Doug: Marin needs to be involved in the Hwy 37 causeway issue. A. We are talking with other counties. There are UC Davis and UC Berkeley efforts looking at governance. People are trying to stick to a timeline.

Tamra: What about Resiliency by Design? A. After Sandy, there was an international competition for responses to protect the New York/New Jersey shoreline. The Bay Area is trying to fundraise for something similar here. The competition engages landscape architects and engineers. Tamra: Has there been approval?

Jeff: The Sandy study had substantial federal funding. There was a substantial effect on planning re the shoreline, and a seawall for the lower end of Manhattan. Here, there is private fundraising. RDU has a full-time person. There is a committee to go forward. We have a different regulatory environment than New York, a more difficult permitting process. There is a reaction to outsiders coming in. Is there a design or an implementation focus? A. There is a lot of energy and brains behind these efforts.

Bill: Collaboration is a good foundation. It's all about the numbers. How are we planning to roll out the Vulnerability Assessment in a way that gets maximum public impact? Dollars are a "lead"; figures on numbers of people too. There should be PR and publicity. A. Those numbers are in the report, in the Impacts at a Glance section. We have a communications consultant on board. There is an Internal Communications Plan. We are pulling together an elevator talk and longer 3-minute and 10-minute talks. There is not a large budget/amount of time for the Vulnerability Assessment release. Not a lot of answers at this point. There will be a January-February release and meetings. Bill: We can help to get the word out.

Pam: It will be a tricky rollout if there is a Vulnerability Assessment without answers.

Bob: The Bay Area Council report, "Surviving the Storm" (2015), a report that models the potential economic impacts of a 150-year mega storm, is a reason that storms grab political attention. What is the role of the 100-year storm in the Vulnerability Assessment? A. Marin is already impacted by storms. The sea level rise projections are already exceeded by storm surges. Our 100-year storm is more than 10 inches. We know the impacts—for example, the 2014 shutdown of the Marin City exit at Hwy. 101. It is harder to communicate long-term effects if you don't believe in sea level rise.

Rick: Is there any discussion of creating a new bureaucracy to coordinate this issue? A. Marin and San Mateo use the same model. The BART model is translatable. There is an advantage in

collaboration, but much depends on specific local knowledge. There is some talk of regional databases, clearinghouses.

Susan: How does Measure AA work with these efforts? A. We are meeting where mentioned in Measure AA. We are ready to receive funding. Lots of projects are being developed. Applications are due in September for next year's implementation. There is not enough money to fund everything. We will be ready when opportunities arise. We are tracking and waiting for the Request for Proposals. Nine percent is slotted for the North Bay over 20 years, and this will leverage state and federal funding.

Kate: Clarification: Is the State Lands Commission reclaiming lands that will be under water? Can the SLC do this? A. If the lands are under water, the SLC can charge rent to property owners.

Kate: Re the Game of Floods, are there opportunities for sewage agencies and other agencies to participate? A. They have played the Game with North Bay water agencies' boards and EPA, FEMA.

Doug: What are the take-aways from this discussion? How can we help Chris? A. This is in process: funding and schedules. There will be North Marin, Central Marin, and South Marin releases, with several meetings, talking about the Vulnerability Assessment and answering questions. They want ideas about how to do this efficiently.

Tamra: Have Chris present, and have volunteers to assist. Play the Game of Floods. A. This would be challenging for large meetings.

Belle: What about the communications plans and consultant? A. MIG is a consultant. Also Ellen Cross. We will be working on plan deliverables with stakeholders.

## **Reports**

**Marin County Climate Action Plan (Damon):** "Chris is a star." Damon sat in on an internal review of the Vulnerability Assessment.

Update re the County subcommittee on sea level rise adaptation: The subcommittee previously consisted of Kate Sears and Steve Kinsey. Damon is replacing Kinsey. They will eventually merge efforts. Damon has found that even in more conservative areas of the county, people get that they will be affected by sea level rise.

Re mitigation: Last time, Damon reported that the county was on the verge of acquiring a new hire. They have now hired Sabrina Sahakinum (sp?), formerly the sustainability coordinator for Jackson Winery.

Re the Climate Action Plan, there will be an internal meeting in 30-60 days. They need to get all of the right people in the room. They will discuss the budget of \$1 million, ½ for implementation

of the Plan and ½ for the green commute. The Chief Administrator is taking the lead on the green commute.

They will hold the first community meeting in the first quarter of 2017. The genesis will be similar to the meetings in San Rafael. 1. Bring in appropriate stakeholders, 2. Expand reach, 3. Refine priorities. The Climate Action Plan is divided into municipal (county) and community (unincorporated areas). They need help with outreach and education.

Ed: Marin has a large stock of housing. A time-of-sale energy audit is the only way to attack the problem at a large scales. A. This should be put on the list. Ed: We need an emergency preparedness mindset. Time of sale is the cheapest way.

Rick: Does the County have a solar matrix? A. A couple of buildings. There is talk about Greenpoint. More regulation—scrapped. More ad hoc.

Bob: We need to look at bang-for-the-buck. Is there a set methodology? A. Will add this to the agenda.

Pam: The “right folks” include DPW, Eric Steger (solar energy efficiency effort). We need to consider cost-benefit. What grants are available and what general fund money?

Chris: Building maintenance people are looking at vehicle chargers. These will be quicker-charging. Fit desires with the money available. Tamra: There is an app for charger availability.

Belle: Looking at schools, they are weak on curriculum, but there are good ideas out there. A. The schools are a bully pulpit. The county has a long-term relationship with Mary Jane Burke.

Max: Are there ideas for expanding Resilient Neighborhoods? A. Yes. Damon is starting a team. This may transition to other teams to reach all County employees. Damon noted that Sabrina will also be working on the green commute issue.

Ed: Re climate literacy and curriculum implementation, there are people set up now to come in and give presentations on climate literacy.

Bob: Re cost-benefit analysis, there are lists of activities with grant subsidization. Model what other folks should do. Look beyond temporary subsidies.

Bill: What is the structure of the quarterly meetings? Is it come-one, come-all? A. Damon recommended that MCL spend time on the issue in our November or December meeting, have a roundtable. Pam: How much time? A. Twenty minutes.

Bill: Suggest that once the process gets going with municipal and community, add a component of countywide collaboration. Also, there is an ongoing task to revise and update. There is a new state mandate for 2020. Bring the Plan in line with this. This should be a main effort of these meetings. A. Yes. Stakeholders include business.

Ed: Novato has a list of 29 climate measures, but there is no one on staff to implement them. A. Marin has Dana Armanino. Ed: Suggestions on how to deal with Novato's problem? A. Step by step. Marin started with a volunteer coordinator. They continued to beat the drum, keeping Cory. Novato has a divided council. Ed: We need \$60,000 to hire at least a part-time coordinator. A. Damon will follow up and talk to Josh.

Pam: Is the roll-out just on mitigation? A. Adaptation is separate. Chris gave a timetable. Pam: There is nothing in the state related to adaptation, and limited funding. A. There is gamesmanship as to what funding is called.

**Time to Lead on Climate (Belle):** They are consulting on a new climate forum event. They have 3-4 ideas and will disclose them next time. There was little coverage of climate in the debates. There were really good thoughts expressed in the recent event. Go to the Lead On Climate website and listen to the webcast. This recasts the way to communicate about climate.

Nona: Start with where people are in their concerns. Find a climate nexus.

Bill: Put out action alerts, things to do. There are 17 swing districts re climate. Talk about the right candidate.

**Sierra Club, MCE Retreat, State Legislation (Ed):** Damon went to the MCE retreat. They are on solid footing and expanding. They are working through the challenges of expansion, meeting procurement goals, on track re parting company with Shell. Ed: They are not doing enough re local distributed energy and energy efficiency. Also, they should promote Deep Green more. There is now an association of CCAs in California, with 6 members currently. MCL now has another organization to link up with. Damon: MCE has improved re energy efficiency. There are local energy projects, but they want to make this a pillar. College of Marin has partnered with MCE. Ask Ann Thomas.

Doug: Roger suggested Deep Green as an action item. One way is for people to talk to city councils about going Deep Green, form groups to do so. Pam: Put this on the agenda for next month: People pledging to go to meetings.

Ed: The early opt-out rate in Marin was 20%. The rate in San Mateo is 1.5%. This exemplifies a change in public attitude.

Tamra: This is one part of the program in Resilient Neighborhoods.

**Community Marin (Rick):** They sent a letter to the County re IPM, supporting pesticide use as a last resort item.

**Carbon Sequestration (Bob):** There was a discussion with the Carbon Cycle folks re relations with Judy and Bob: Access and policy recommendations. They are close to a defined relationship. They will set up interviews with ranchers re financing and payback. The goal is to

determine what a model policy would look like. Is it viable? Policymakers decide where to put funds. Only a handful of ranchers have experience, and it is difficult to generalize.

### **Announcements**

There is a meeting tonight at Tamra's house re funders.

Bill McKibben will be speaking at the Bioneers event, as will Terry Tempest Williams.

Susan: There is a solar project at Gness Field. The maps are problematic. The project may be encroaching on wetlands. MCL guidelines for ground-based solar: a test case. This is on the County website. Ed: This is vulnerable to sea level rise.

Doug: There is a meeting on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> re the private toll road for Hwy. 37. Contact Doug if interested.

Meeting adjourned 11:15.

Minutes: PN.