

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Climate Action Working Group: October 16, 2015

Tamalpais Conference Room, 175 N. Redwood Blvd., San Rafael

Present: Co-chairs Pam Reaves and Doug Wilson, Pat Nelson, Heather Furmidge, Nona Dennis, Judy Teichman, Leslie Alden, Christine O'Rourke, Bob Bundy, Dana Armanino, Mary Morgan, Belle Cole, Kate Powers, Susan Robinson, Rick Fraites. Also present, guest speaker Christine O'Rourke, Supervisor Damon Connolly.

Doug opened the meeting at 9:06.

Quick Intros: Attendee introductions.

Approval of the Agenda: Agenda was approved as amended. M/S/P. Kate/Rick/Approved.

Approval of Minutes: Doug provided a correction of the September minutes. M/S/P. Susan/Kate/Approved as amended.

Introduction of guest speaker Christine O'Rourke

Doug introduced guest speaker Christine O'Rourke, Sustainability Coordinator at Marin Climate & Energy Partnership (MCEP) and stated that Christine has been working with Marin County cities on climate issues. Her work bears upon the Climate Action Working Group's interest in getting all of the players to work together on climate issues. Christine noted the availability of the current version of the Climate Action Plan on the County's website (www.marincounty.or/climate). The final version will go to the Board of Supervisors on November 10.

Guest Speaker Presentation and Discussion

Christine described the mission and role of MCEP: to create a county-wide partnership. MCEP works with all 11 cities and towns in Marin, the County, and relevant organizations. It is funded by member contributions, which they leverage to obtain additional grant funding.

The mission of MCEP is to create a countywide partnership that allows partner members to work collaboratively, share resources and secure funding to:

- 1) discuss, study and implement overarching policies and programs, ranging from emission reduction strategies to adaptation, contained in each agency's Climate Action Plan; and
- 2) collect data and report on progress in meeting each partner member's individual greenhouse gas (GHG) emission targets.

Comment: Dana noted the work of the Marin County Energy Watch Partnership, which is funded by ratepayers under the auspices of the CPUC. This partnership with the County

includes businesses, agencies, and residential customers, and addresses climate and inventory issues in the context of promoting energy efficiency.

Re the efforts of Marin cities and towns, and the County, Christine noted the value of looking at the Climate Action Plans of the various jurisdictions, seeing what is in the plans and what can be efficiently developed together. MCEP is an extension of the planning staff of members; it is not a decision-making body. Its meetings are not public meetings subject to the Brown Act.

Accomplishments of members so far include GHG inventories in all cities, in 2005 and 2010. They eventually want to produce annual inventories, using a consistent methodology for purposes of meaningful comparisons.

Questions:

Mary: Are inventories being conducted in unincorporated areas? A: Initially cities only. There was a County Municipal Inventory in 2012. Consistency of methodology is an issue.

Belle: Does this inventory effort involve an extension of jurisdiction for the cities? A: It is more cost-effective to work together and hire a GHG inventory expert. It would be challenging for small cities, particularly, to do this on their own.

Doug noted the importance of an integrated metric.

Leslie: Are all 11 Marin cities members of MCEP? A: Yes.

Judy: Are agriculture/open space part of the inventories? A: Ag is not included for cities. The County considers ag emissions, such as truck emissions, manure waste, fertilizers. Ag is 23% of emissions in unincorporated areas, and 5% countywide (compared to 8% statewide). Open space is considered a sink; it is not included in emissions sources. Tree-planting is a factor in cities, but they are not taking credit for this as an offset.

[Return to Christine's presentation]

MCEP accomplishments include a 2010 initiative to develop Climate Action Plans (CAPs). With grant funding from MCF, MCEP helped to develop climate action plans for six partner jurisdictions: Larkspur, Belvedere, Tiburon, San Anselmo, Fairfax and Ross. CAPs of these cities identify mutual measures to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions.

MCEP also developed a model Green Building Ordinance (BERST), which was adopted by several jurisdictions but superseded by the state Cal Green effort. A cost-effectiveness study is required re REACH codes (building energy standards more stringent than statewide standards). Marin County and some Marin cities have REACH codes.

MCEP also vetted PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) providers in Marin, thereby promoting competition among providers and a better deal for homeowners. Approved providers include HERO, Yygrene, Fig Tree, Alliance NRG, plus California First. MCEP assisted in a County-drafted collaborative agreement with Best Management Practices and proper

marketing support for local contractors. MCEP drafted a model ordinance and resolution to help cities adopt the PACE program. Almost all cities have signed on. The PACE program allows property owners to finance energy efficiency improvement systems through an assessment on their property tax bill.

Other programs in which MCEP has had a role include the plastic bag ban, Zero Waste programs (in collaboration with the County), programs to deal with construction demolition debris, green procurement. MCEP has gathered information for Public Works staff relating to EV chargers, bike/pedestrian programs, LED lights.

MCEP has two websites. See marinclimate.org, where you can link to the Marin Tracker site, on which you can see the progress of the various jurisdictions. As this site tracks progress, it promotes competition and motivates community members.

Question: Doug: What can we do to assist MCEP? **A:** One thing MCL can do is to support the update to the County Climate Action Plan. A draft was released to the public in August 2014. They received good comments and released a revised version in July 2015. It was brought back with further changes in September and is expected to go to the Board of Supervisors on November 10.

The pending CAP places more emphasis on MCE's Deep Green program to achieve its goals. Also emphasizes energy efficiency.

It makes a comprehensive update to the inventory to match new protocols. Initially there were 5 inputs; now there are approximately 40.

RE meeting emission reduction targets, we met the target of 15% reduction from 1990 levels, upped the target from 15% to 30%, and are on track to meet the new state targets 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050.

Question: Doug: How is everything meshing? What next?

Comment: Nona: The new Climate Action Plan added a full Ag chapter. The original section was a missed opportunity for a deeper dive. The current protocols don't allow for counting sequestration toward the 30%, but don't disregard it. The Plan promotes use of methane digesters, efficiency of pump systems and tractors, etc. It opens up the use of carbon markets on a voluntary basis.

Comment: Judy: Is the County planning to update the protocols? **A:** Possibly. One issue is whether the credits stay within the County.

Question: Doug: Is there a balance between sinks and emissions? What are the net emissions? **A:** We need to sequester way more than we're producing, to make a difference.

Question: Belle: As we move toward the Paris climate talks, and the Governor promotes the California model, are there any plans to promote Marin as a model and support the Governor? **A:** No, but that's an interesting idea. Marin is a CCA leader.

Comment: Nona: Consumption is a missing factor in the Marin calculations. That is a huge factor.

There are steps being taken to include consumption in climate analyses. UC Berkeley is working on a consumption-based inventory. But how would that inventory be used? The only way to affect the outcome would be to reduce everyone's income—not a popular idea.

We also need to consider the concept of exporting emissions, and include the life-cycle cost of products in the analysis. RE our carbon footprint, there would be a negative comparison, worldwide, for Marin.

Comment: Mary: The Plan contains bureaucratic language and assumptions re readers' knowledge level. We need a communication piece for "regular people," who want to know, "What can I do?" What about updating and linking to things that people can do in the home, perhaps on the website? People need to know "Why is this important?" Reducing consumption is about values. We are buying more than we need.

Reports

Status of OWL Project – Leslie Alden

The OWL project, of the Center for Climate Preparedness and Community Resilience has attempted to engage the attention of the general public on the pathways near Tam High School. OWL virtual-reality viewfinders allow people to see the potential impacts and responses to sea level rise under various scenarios at the location of the viewfinder. The visualization enables people to imagine what is coming and how we might adapt. It reduces the feeling that we can't do anything about climate change, and the propensity to think that government will somehow take care of it. The project has garnered 4,000 individual viewings at the Tam High pathway site; 73% of those who looked are concerned about climate-change impacts.

Resilient Neighborhoods/Sustainable organizations – Pam and Doug reported/led a discussion on current events in the absence of Tamra Peters and Bill Carney (who are occupied with the Lead On Climate event)

The November 10 Board of Supervisors meeting will be a big climate day. In addition to consideration of the Climate Action Plan, a climate proclamation will go to the Board of Supervisors. Belle drafted the proclamation, Damon and Kate revised it. The MCL board will vote on whether to have MCL listed as a supporter. The proclamation will be available to the public in advance, and it can be discussed at the November 9 climate event at Dominican.

The next step is further consideration of Sea Level Rise (SLR). Sea Smart (Liebster) is addressing SLR on the ocean coast side of the county. Bay WAVE is assessing SLR on the Bay side of the county. The Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) is leading the charge on SLR. Legislation by Save the Bay created the Bay Restoration Authority; a parcel tax of \$12 billed as a tax for marsh restoration constituted a "start."

Interested parties are working to pull everyone to the table. A new subgroup, consisting of Bay WAVE, the county, the councils/elected of all Marin cities, are working to promote cross-pollination and inter-communication. They hold a large, monthly policy group meeting, in addition to smaller excomm meetings. Chris Chu is leading this year. Bay WAVE has received significant funding \$381,000 + \$250,000. They will conduct a vulnerability assessment first, and some money is likely to be left for planning. Questions to be addressed include: What do we value? What is the price tag? How do we allocate funds?

Marin SLR, DPW, and OWL are working to create one website re SLR in Marin County.

There is a need for grassroots input, to put pressure on elected officials and give them cover and strength for bolder action. Community activists + “technicals” + electeds = 3-legged stool. In contrast to the traditional resistance to County dictates, there is a new emphasis on collaboration. The paradigm shift lays the groundwork for collaboration across jurisdictions.

Damon pointed out the participants need to get a method of working in place to deal with inevitable conflicts, and a shift in language away from “us versus them.” We also need to consider how to make a thick Climate Action Plan tome alive and meaningful, to engage the public.

Q: Leslie suggested that there should be a focus on adaptation. A. (Damon): That is addressed in Chapter 8 of the Climate Action Plan. On the issue of what to do re Chapters 4 – 7 on mitigation: As a way to get concrete things done, we need to break out priority items and get the Board of Supervisors, staff, and the community working together. Damon and Kate Sears are point people on the Board, and Dana is the point person on staff.

The most recent conversation on started as part of the budget discussion in spring. The key is to tie in with what other jurisdictions and groups are doing and to bolster the sustainability team. A concept paper will go to the Board of Supervisors on November 11. No opposition to the Climate Action Plan is anticipated. There will be a budget conversation for 2016 – 2017 in March.

Comments: Pam mentioned that she attended an excellent listening session featuring Contra Costa Public Health spokesperson Abigail Kroch, in which they discussed how to obtain “more bang for the buck.” Mary suggested that officials “go where the people are” and increase their presence in West Marin.

Damon stated that the next steps are for Christina and Dana to review template strategies and comment. He noted the importance of community advocacy: Show up at council meetings at the city level as well as at County meetings.

Update on November 9 Lead On Climate Event – Belle

Thirty-two environmental organizations are participating (12 partners and 20 supporters). They have a flier. People can go to the website (www.leadonclimate.org) to get tickets. They expect 840 people. Other organizations should put this event on their websites. Event

organizers are reaching out to invite public officials. They will provide succinct statements about partner organizations to attendees at the event. The speakers are impressive.

Report on progress of the MCL CCA policy statement group. This is in process.

RE CPUC updates: keep watching. MCL needs lead time to respond.

Report on Community Marin – Rick

There was a meeting with Jack Liebster, concerning where the County is headed. How to communicate with the average person: don't rely on statistics/scare tactics. Describe what is in it for them. Comment (Damon): Lead by example.

Report on Main Street Moms – Mary

At MCE's invitation, the Moms went to a Board meeting and made a presentation. The Moms found the Board responsive and helpful.

The Moms and MCE support the following agenda:

1. Work on ways to communicate re the importance of CCAs around the world. Connect it to the Paris talks in a real way.
2. Work with MCE on a handout from the grassroots point of view.
3. Use the November 9 event to communicate. Hand out a leaflet.
4. Target the CPUC with MCL. The PCIA issue is important (fee increase for solar)
5. Communicate with members of organizations re signing up for Deep Green.

One important feature is the smallness of the Moms organization. They can try out ideas on a small scale. MCE set up a Google group for communication.

In the Countywide plan, 60% of expected GHG reductions are dependent on CCAs and Deep Green.

Comment (Kate): Currently, Deep Green is 100% wind, but this is changing.

Report on Oakland Climate Adaptation Session in Oakland – Pam and Doug

Pam and Doug attended a climate adaptation session in Oakland on October 12. Representatives from the State showed up. The most helpful participants were the regional people emphasizing social justice issues. Important items included drafting a checklist for social equity. What was left out of most discussions was the macro picture.

Comment: The OPR website makes all planning documents available. There are other websites re climate legislation. It is important to get the lay of the land first.

Announcements

We will not have Tori Estrada as a speaker for the next meeting on November 19. Chris Chu is a possible speaker for January.

Comments: Heather: We need a whiteboard description of “the big picture” – what the various players are doing and how these efforts connect. Mary added: Assess what comes out of efforts/planning. Nona: We need to parse out the mitigation side—GHG reduction offers more on the ground opportunities. Adaptation entails a large, sweeping time horizon and is based on a vulnerability assessment. Damon: Make the leap. Keep track of the bureaucracy without losing sight of real-life impact.

All speakers emphasized public engagement. We need to distill where there is room for us.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:17.