

Otay River Watershed Management Plan and Special Area Management Plan Working Group Meeting Minutes

Date: June 22, 2004
Time: 6:30pm – 9:00pm
Location: John Lippitt Public Works Center located at 1800 Maxwell Road in Chula Vista, CA 91911.
Purpose: To identify the roles and responsibilities of the Working Group; identify and organize interest groups; recommend representatives and alternates for each interest group; facilitate a discussion of the goals and objectives ; and to select a Co-Chairman for the Working Group.

1 Welcoming Comments by Supervisor Greg Cox

- Supervisor Greg Cox introduced the participants in the Otay River WMP and SAMP effort.
- Supervisor Cox briefly discussed the OVRP and the joint city/county/citizen partnership that has been developed for the river park.
- The park will eventually extend 11 miles from the Beach/Bay to the Otay Valley Lakes and that an additional 101 acres were just acquired in the Otay River Valley under the Regional Park Plan.
- Supervisor Cox identified citizen participation in the OVRP and specifically cited trash clean-up efforts, and GIS mapping of stormwater outfalls.

2 Introductions

- The County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) introduced members of the Project Team and the Consultant Team:

Project Team:

- Tracy Cline, EMSIII, Project Manager with the County of San Diego, Working Group Co-chair
- Hank Levien, Director, Public Works, City of Imperial Beach
- Karen Helyer, Senior Associate Environmental Specialist, SD Unified Port District
- Marisa Lundstedt, Environmental Projects Manager, City of Chula Vista
- Rick Fox, Biologist III, City of SD

Consultant Team:

- Aspen Environmental Group, Spencer MacNeil, D. Env. Senior Associate: Aspen Project Manager and Overall Coordination and Oversight
 - Regulatory Issues
 - RBF, Scott Taylor, Vice President: Hydrology, Hydraulics, Water Quality
 - Jones and Stokes – Ken Schwartz PhD, Associate Principal: Geomorphology Watershed response to land use change
 - Aqua Terra – Tony Donigian, President: Hydrology and Water Quality, Modeling
 - Geoscience – Dennis Williams PhD, President: Geology and Groundwater
 - Helix Environmental – Tom Huffman, Vice President: Biology
 - TAIC – Pat Atchison, SD Office Manager: Mapping and Spatial Analysis (GIS)
- Spencer MacNeil Aspen Project Manager, presented examples of GIS base maps being created as part of the Watershed Management Planning effort and discussed how these GIS products that can be used by stakeholders for planning purposes.
 - County provided a PowerPoint presentation that included (**see handouts**):
 - Rough project schedule and deliverables:

Watershed Management Plan

- State Grant (Prop 13) requires completion of the WMP by March 2005
- Draft Watershed Assessment Report and GIS Inventory (July/Aug)
- Draft Pollutant Characterization Report (Aug/Sept)
- Draft Watershed Management Objectives (Aug/Sept)
- Draft Management Strategies (Sept/Oct)
- Draft Water Quality Monitoring Strategy (Oct/Nov)
- Draft and Final WMP (November/March)

Special Area Management Plan

- Goals and Objectives (July/August)
- Purpose and Need Statement (July/August)
- Integration Report (July/August)
- Planning Principles Report (September/October)
- Alternatives Analysis Report (January/February 05)
- Restoration/Mitigation Plan (June/July 05)
- Monitoring Plan (July/August 05)
- SAMP Executive Summary (October/November 05)

3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Working Group

- Membership structure and roles/responsibilities of the Working Group
- Working Group Guidelines were handed out at the beginning of the meeting and included:
 - Stakeholder input is very important in the planning process and that all stakeholders in the watershed are welcome at all meeting of the Working Group.
 - All decisions of the Working Group will be based on a consensus of the group rather than a vote.
 - To insure that all views have equal representation specific interest groups have been preliminarily identified (see below). The working group will serve in an advisory capacity to both the WMP and SAMP
 - The Working Group identified six interest groups
 - Attendees at the Working Group were selected based on previous participation, by invitation/recommendation by another participant, or by the stakeholder completing a questionnaire (more than 130 were notified by E-mail)
 - Individuals would need to identify which Interest Group best represents their goals, ideas, beliefs etc.
 - Interest Groups will nominate representatives to represent them in the decision process for the WMP/SAMP.
 - The number of members within each Interest Group are as follows:
 - Property Owners (2)
 - Business/Building (5)
 - Environmental (4)
 - Regulatory Agencies (2 + project team)
 - Recreational (7)
 - Other:
 - Residents – non-property owners (0)
 - OVRP – CAC (4)
 - Political (6)
- Nominated representatives will be formally presented to the Policy Committee for confirmation of their participation as a representative.
- Future meeting operation would be as follows:

- Presided over by Co-Chairs Tracy Cline of the County of San Diego and John Willet OVRP Citizen Action Committee
- The group requested that they meet the first Wednesday of every month
- The Meetings will initially be held at the John Lippet Public Works Building from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.
- Next meeting tentatively scheduled for July 7, 2004
- All decisions shall be by consensus
- Quorum decided by simple majority (>50%)
- Discussion within interest groups:

Regular Meeting Schedule

<u>Interest Group</u>	<u>Preferred Times</u>
Environmental	evenings - not 2 nd Wed or 3 rd Tue of each month
Businesses/Property Owners	1 to 4 pm - not Tuesdays
CAC	evenings - prefer Wednesdays
Resource agencies	flexible
Elected Official Representatives	flexible
Recreation	flexible

- **Consensus reached on meeting schedule:** First Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm
- **Optional locations for future meetings:**
 - John Lippet Public Works Center
 - City of Imperial Beach - Dempsey Holder Safety Center
 - Montgomery -Waller Dept of Public Works – City of SD (consensus: too loud)
 - City Planning – City of Chula Vista (Consensus: not as convenient)
- **Consensus reached on next meeting:** The next meeting will be held on July 7, 2004 (6:30-8:30 PM) at the same location, the John Lippet Public Works Center. The regular monthly meetings could alternate between the John Lippet Public Works Center and the City of Imperial Beach Public Works Center.

Representatives chosen by each Interest Group:

<u>Interest Group</u>	<u>Representatives/ Alternate</u>
Environmental	Cindy Burrascano/ Mike McCoy Alt: Jim Peugh
Businesses/Property Owners	Todd Galarneau/John Rilling Alt: Beverly Blessent
CAC	John Willet/Frank Ohrmund Alt: Jack Bransford
Resource agencies	SDRWQCB will attend every meeting
Elected Official Representatives	will attend every meeting
Recreation	Don Powers/Theresa Acerro /TBD

- **Co-Chair chosen by Working Group (consensus):** John Willet
- **Existing Co-Chair:** Tracy Cline

4 What is a Watershed Plan?

- What is a Watershed? Definition by the State Water Quality Control Board: It is the area of land where precipitation falls and drains (surface or subsurface) to a common outlet body of water, such as the ocean.
- Why Watershed Planning? To help make decisions with regard to future development by looking at the entire watershed. Understanding that individual or site specific projects affect the larger watershed.

- What is a Watershed Management Plan? A planning tool by which decisions affecting the watershed can be made.

5 Discussion on Goals and Objectives

- Prior to discussion of the Goals and Objectives the group raised a question regarding how the WMP will fit into the existing documentation and regulations already in place in the watershed.
- The County explained that the Watershed Plan was being viewed as a document to find out about all existing plans, programs and regulations that are underway in the Watershed. Furthermore it was stated that it was not the intent of the plan to create additional layers of regulation but a way to potentially coordinate existing ones.
- Additionally, the County explained that the SAMP being prepared for the Watershed was a regulatory mechanism that would result in the protection and management of aquatic resources while recognizing the need for economic development. The SAMP could also result in the issuance of permits by the Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Fish and Game as related to wetlands under the Clean Water Act 401 and Section 1600 of the California State Fish and Game Code.
- The County explained that one reason the County is pursuing this SAMP is that the MSCP did not get full coverage for wetlands or other aquatic resources. The SAMP and WMP can be thought of as being equivalent to the MSCP but for aquatic resources.
- John Willett of the OVRP – CAC asked/posed the following:
 - The CAC is mainly concerned about a limited number of drainages (3) with regards to water quality because the remaining drainages are “filtered in the Otay Lakes”.
 - Will the WMP address flooding issues?
 - There are already useful documents in place such as the Western Otay Valley Regional Park Natural Resource Management Plan, generally covers area from Heritage Road west to the SD Bay, and the Otay Ranch Resource Management Plan covers areas from Heritage Road east to the Otay Lakes Dam, that the CAC is using as a guideline. Will the WMP take these into account?
 - The CAC would like a list of documents being integrated put on the MSCP website or the Project Clean Water Web-site so that stakeholders could verify if any are missing.
- County’s response:
 - All of the documents mentioned by Mr. Willets are being reviewed by the Project Consultant to ensure that the Watershed Plan and the SAMP do not create any conflicts. Both plans are expected to coordinate with these existing plans and programs. The County indicated that a list could be created that lists all plans and programs that will be reviewed regarding the WMP/SAMP. This list can be posted either on the MSCP website with links to other sites such as the Project Clean Water website. The County explained that culverts and road crossings that impact aquatic resources will be addressed in the WMP and could be covered under the SAMP. The County indicated that flood control would be an issue discussed in the WMP.
- Project Consultant responses:
 - Aspen described the GIS database that is being developed; it will include flood control and other public facilities in waterways in the watershed. The GIS database would be available in an ArcView format so that almost anyone can view maps or it can be in pdf versions.

- Current Examples of GIS layers include: flood control facilities, vegetation, geologic formations, existing land use, recreational trails, historical data as far back as 1928 aerial photographs, etc.
- **CAC Interest Group Goals:**
 1. Preserve open space.
 2. Identify locations and allow for future active recreation sites.
 3. Allow for multi-purpose trails.
 4. Identify and allow for public access points to the open space and strategically placed staging areas.
 5. Allow for a streamlined permitting process for regional park activities.
 6. Include an educational component within the preserve areas.
 7. Protect water quality.
 8. Maintain connectivity with other open space and trail systems.
 9. Include coordination efforts with future restoration efforts.
 10. Otay River Valley Cleanup Project to continue as envisioned in 2000
 11. Development of a GIS Mapping system compatible with the City of Chula Vista's, City of San Diego's and the County of San Diego's, with the ability to download from the above activities' web sites.
 12. Watershed Management Plan and Special Area Management Plan are compatible with the City of Chula Vista, City of San Diego and the County of San Diego "Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Programs".
 13. Integrate the Goals and Objectives of the OVRP Concept Plan for the Western OVRP, as approved by the Cities of Chula Vista and San Diego and the County of San Diego in June 1997, into the WMP. Coordinate with the OVRP programs currently being developed by the OVRP staff and approved by the OVRP CAC as coordinated by Robert Rushlow, in developing the Regional Park.
- **Property Owner/Business and Building Interest Group Goals:**
 1. The plan should be multi-disciplinary and should avoid a single-purpose focus. The plan should be balanced and take into account other equally important goals such as provision of housing, economic development and larger, broader goals related to community development.
 2. The plan should not create or recommend duplicative or conflicting regulation. The San Diego region is subject to a myriad of regulations including the MSCP, the individual JURMPs and SUSMPs of each jurisdiction, local zoning, land use regulations and ordinances, the requirements of local state and federal agencies such as the RWQCB, the CDFG, the USFWS and the Army Corps of Engineers and state and federal statutes This plan should identify these existing protections and avoid any duplicative or conflicting recommendations or processes.
 3. The plan should reflect the existing General Plans and Community and Specific Plans that exist in each one of the participating jurisdictions, which were developed based on a balancing of community goals and desires by the elected officials of each community.
- **Environmental Interest Group Goals:**
 1. Protect and restore waterways, including seasonal streams and isolated wetlands (including vernal pools), intermittent wetlands, and floodplains including their full functions and values.
 2. Protect groundwater and surface water from contamination and levels of extraction that will degrade the support of native wildlife and vegetation.
 3. Preserve the water absorption capacity of the watershed so the flow capacity of natural waterways is not exceeded during storms.
 4. Limit dry season runoff so that seasonal wetlands and the plants and animals that depend on them will survive and the habitat types will not be converted.

5. Control erosion at its sources so natural waterways and wetlands will not be degraded.
 6. Seek to restore drainage ditches, concrete channels, and storm water pipes to natural, or at least more nearly natural, water flow where practical and beneficial.
 7. Protect natural landforms.
 8. Protect wildlife movement and dispersal corridors.
 9. Prevent disposal of refuse including intentional dumps or littering and that carried by runoff into waterways.
 10. Remove invasive plant and animal species and their sources of seed and stolon.
 11. Provide flood management.
 12. Provide sediment control while allowing for natural sand replenishment.
 13. Control solid waste and waste water.
 14. Deal with homeless occupation in the watershed.
- **Regulatory Interest Group Goals:**
 1. Facilitate dialogue between stakeholders.
 2. Maintain and achieve a healthy watershed.
 3. Facilitate changes and improvements within the watershed.
 4. Be a living document.
 - **Recreation Interest Group Goals:**
 1. Active recreation will be placed away from key habitat areas so that noise, lights, traffic will neither infringe upon the habitat nor diminish the enjoyment of the park by hikers, bikers, birdwatchers, and ecotourists who seek enjoyment of nature.
 2. Maintain a 100-foot native buffer area between development and recreational trails.
 3. Educate and require trail users to clean up after themselves and their animals, especially when commercial groups use trails.
 - **SDRWQCB Goals for the Otay River Watershed Planning Effort**
 1. Formation of a viable, active watershed council that continues beyond this short-term watershed planning effort
 2. Dialogue / communication between stakeholders about watershed issues and how to address them
 3. A watershed plan focused on achieving and sustaining a healthy watershed (as measured by an array of indicators, including but not limited to water quality)
 4. A watershed plan focused on fixing problems by addressing sources and causes of problems
 5. A watershed plan focused on preventing problems by anticipating and addressing threats and their sources and causes
 6. A watershed plan that includes recommendations for changes and improvements in plans, processes, projects, programs, practices, policies, activities, “business as usual,” etc.
 7. A watershed plan that includes a well thought out strategy for implementation
 8. Commitment by the watershed council to implementation of the watershed plan
 9. Commitment by the watershed council to update and fine-tune the watershed plan to ensure that it is a living, useful document