



**SANTA MONICA BAY
RESTORATION COMMISSION**
MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

- DRAFT -

**SANTA MONICA BAY RESTORATION COMMISSION
Governing Board Meeting Minutes**

Date: Thursday, April 15, 2021

Time: 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Remote Meeting Only

Vice-chair Timothy Lippman called the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission's (Commission) Governing Board meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Commission staff provided an overview of the meeting protocols. Introductions followed. Charlie Caspary served as Chair starting at 9:43 a.m.

1) Comments from Members of the Public on Items not on the Agenda and Public Testimony on All Agenda Items

Kathy Knight commented on a recent California Native Plant Society presentation and an upcoming talk regarding the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve (Reserve).

Sofia Morales and Lisa Rachal commented and shared a video regarding the Reserve, including species present and public access. At Caspary's request, Lisa Rachal confirmed her understanding that California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) manages the Reserve.

Member comments followed on Sofia Morales and Lisa Rachal's presentation. Kevin McKeown commented on organizations that may be prepared to support public access if it were increased at the Reserve, his request for the development of a resolution regarding public access at the Reserve, and his representation on the Commission. Laurie Newman commented on the Commission's membership, including member Kevin McKeown's representation, and if the Ballona Creek watershed cities have a position on public access at the Reserve. Caspary stated that additional comments and responses would be allowed during item 5.b (Member Comment).

2) Informational Items

a) Order of Agenda

There was no change to the order of the agenda. The order of the agenda was approved without objection.

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b) Report from the Chair

Caspary reported on the March 18, 2021 Executive Committee meeting, which included reports on Commission staff activities, updates on the Projected Agenda Items Calendar and Informational Items List, development of the April 15, 2021 Governing Board meeting agenda, closed session, and direction for Commission staff to present a draft resolution regarding public access at the Reserve at the next Executive Committee meeting. Caspary also provided an update on Assembly Bill 963 (Baldwin Hills Conservancy: urban watersheds conservancy expansion).

c) Reports from the Technical Advisory Committee

John Dorsey provided an update on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), including the TAC's recommendation at its March 10, 2021 meeting to submit the final draft revised Santa Monica Bay NEP Comprehensive Monitoring Plan (CMP) to the Governing Board for consideration of approval.

d) Reports from the Chief Administrative Director and Santa Monica Bay NEP Director

Guangyu Wang reported on collaboration with The Bay Foundation staff to develop and finalize the draft Santa Monica Bay NEP Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Work Plan (FY22 Work Plan) and the final draft CMP. Wang also reported on Commission staff's work activities including Proposition 84 grant management, support of ongoing litigation, and participation in the Los Angeles County Safe Clean Water Program and Integrated Regional Water Management Program.

Tom Ford reported on collaboration with Commission staff to develop the FY22 Work Plan, final draft CMP, semi-annual report, and the Santa Monica Bay NEP logo and website; the upcoming virtual US EPA NEP conference; and diversity, equity and inclusion discussions with NEPs and US EPA. Karina Johnston provided an update on the Coastal Research Institute, including open solicitation for student internships, and The Bay Foundation's watershed program, including the Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration, LA Living Shoreline, Community-based Restoration at Ballona Wetlands, and LAX Dunes projects. John Dorsey provided an update on the beach characterization study. Ford reported on additional Santa Monica Bay NEP activities carried out by The Bay Foundation, including surveys of plankton community; analysis of methods to transplant eelgrass; kelp restoration and publication regarding analysis of kelp restoration efforts; abalone outplanting; efforts to engage the community virtually; and progress of the Table-to-Farm Composting program.

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Laurie Newman commented and recommended legal counsel to clarify the membership of the Commission, including the role of members and alternates and voting procedures. Caspary stated that he would discuss this recommendation with legal counsel and the Executive Committee at its next meeting.

Member comments followed on actions or goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion discussions with NEPs and US EPA, the publication regarding analysis of kelp restoration efforts, and eelgrass restoration efforts.

3) Governing Board Business

a) Consideration of Approval of February 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes were approved without changes by roll-call vote. Moved: Eric Alegria. Seconded: Martha Tremblay.

b) Consideration of Approval of the Revised Santa Monica Bay NEP Comprehensive Monitoring Program (CMP)

Guangyu Wang introduced this item and recommended the Governing Board approve the final draft revised CMP. Wang invited Karina Johnston to provide an overview of the revision of the CMP, including major changes compared to the 2007 CMP and the development, goals, and scope of the revised CMP. Tom Ford recommended the following changes be made to the cover page of the revised CMP: correct The Bay Foundation's mailing address and add the Commission's website.

At Caspary's request, legal counsel recommended a roll-call vote for this item. The final draft revised CMP was approved, with Tom Ford's recommended changes incorporated, by roll-call vote. Moved: Timothy Lippman. Seconded: Jonathon Bishop. Opposed: Bob Godfrey.

Members thanked the TAC, outside experts, Commission staff, and The Bay Foundation staff for their work in developing the revised CMP. Member comments followed on US EPA's concurrence process for the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) package.

c) Consideration of Approval of the Santa Monica Bay NEP Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Work Plan (FY22 Work Plan)

Guangyu Wang introduced this item, provided an overview of the development and scope of the FY22 Work Plan including how input was incorporated, and recommended the Governing Board approve the final draft FY22 Work Plan.

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Members requested Commission staff to track suggestions that were not incorporated in the final draft FY22 Work Plan for consideration during the next revision or update to the CCMP. Caspary requested these suggestions be distributed to the Governing Board for consideration as part of the next revision or update to the CCMP. Wang stated the next revision or update of the CCMP is anticipated in 2023, consistent with US EPA NEP guidelines.

Tom Ford presented on final draft FY22 Work Plan, including consistency with US EPA NEP guidelines, and recommended the following changes be made to the final draft FY22 Work Plan: correct Sea Grant's name on page 11 of the draft, add CCA (Coastal Conservation Association of California) and HSWRI (Hubbs Sea World Research Institute) to the Common Work Plan Acronyms section, correct The Bay Foundation's mailing address, and add the Commission's website.

Public Comment

Walter Lamb commented on the Reserve, including public access, funding limitations referenced in CDFW's memorandum regarding public access at the Reserve (CDFW Memo), and restoration efforts; the Commission's establishing legislation; and the US EPA NEP grant assistance agreement.

Member Comments

Caspary and members thanked Commission staff and The Bay Foundation staff for their work in developing the FY22 Work Plan.

The final draft FY22 Work Plan was approved, with Tom Ford's recommended changes incorporated, by roll-call vote. Moved: Kelly Clark. Seconded: Wing Tam. Opposed: Bob Godfrey.

4) Additional Informational Items

a) Update on Restoration Activities and Water Quality Improvement Projects in the Santa Monica Bay Watershed: Topanga Lagoon Restoration Planning Project

Guangyu Wang introduced this item and invited Member Clark Stevens to present on the Topanga Lagoon Restoration Planning Project. Stevens provided an overview of the project, including the purpose of the project, development of restoration alternatives based on data and public input, and timeline of the project. Danielle Le Fer thanked members for the opportunity to provide an update on the project.

Member comments followed on tidal prisms and the project's stakeholder engagement efforts. Rosi Dagit responded to questions regarding impacts of brackish conditions on steelhead and tidewater gobies.

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5) Other Businesses

a) Closed Session

No closed session was held.

b) Member Comment

Kevin McKeown commented on his representation on the Commission and advocated for public access to the Reserve.

Bob Godfrey commented on the release of white seabass and seals present near the marina.

Martha Tremblay commented on the virtual launching of the tunnel boring machine as part of the Los Angeles County Sanitation District's Clearwater Project.

Clark Stevens commented on white seabass present near Topanga Lagoon.

Cung Nguyen commented on the Los Angeles County Flood Control District's partnership with the Ocean Cleanup to manage trash pollution.

c) Announcement of Next Meeting Date (tentatively set for June 17, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.)

The next Governing Board meeting is tentatively set for June 17, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m.

Attendance:

Voting Members/Alternates of the Governing Board

Eric Alegria, South Bay Cities (City of Rancho Palos Verdes)
Jonathon Bishop, State Water Resources Control Board
EJ Caldwell, At-Large Representative (West Basin Municipal Water District)
Charlie Caspary, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
Kelly Clark, Environmental/Public Interest (Los Angeles Waterkeeper)
Megan Cooper, California State Coastal Conservancy
Liz Crosson, City of Los Angeles, Office of Mayor Garcetti
Bob Godfrey, At-Large Representative (Marina Del Rey Anglers)
Misti Kerns, Coastal Tourism Industry (Santa Monica Travel & Tourism)
Danielle Le Fer, California Department of Parks and Recreation
Timothy Lippman, LA County Board of Supervisors (3rd District)
Shelley Luce, Environmental/Public Interest (Heal the Bay)
Kevin McKeown, Ballona Creek Watershed Cities (City of Santa Monica)

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Dan Murphy, Los Angeles County Fire Department, Lifeguard Division
Cung Nguyen, County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works
Katherine Pease, Environmental/Public Interest (Heal the Bay)
Timothy Pershing, State Assembly 50th District
Mikke Pierson, Malibu Watershed Cities (City of Malibu)
Randy Rodriguez, California Department of Fish & Wildlife
Rorie Skei, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Clark Stevens, At-Large Representative (Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains)
Wing Tam, Public Works Department, City of LA (LA Sanitation & Environment)
Martha Tremblay, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
Michael Tripp, Los Angeles County Department of Beaches & Harbors
Claire Waggoner, State Water Resources Control Board
Dennis Washburn, At-Large Representative (Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains)

Non-Voting Members/Alternates of the Governing Board

John Dorsey, Technical Advisory Committee
Tom Ford, Santa Monica Bay NEP Director
Laurie Newman, The Bay Foundation
Erica Yelensky, US EPA Region 9

Commission and State Water Resources Control Board Staff

Eric Gillman, State Water Resources Control Board
Caitlin Gray, Commission
Guangyu Wang, Commission

Other Attendees

Craig Cadwallader
Dave Roberts
Karina Johnston, The Bay Foundation
Kathy Knight
Lisa Rachal, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust
Marcelo Villagomez, The Bay Foundation
Richard Brody, California Department of Fish & Wildlife
Rosi Dagit
Snejana Toven
Sofia Morales, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust
Walter Lamb, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust