

Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team

Policy Committee Meeting

May 29, 2009

10:00 a.m. - Noon

San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board Conference Room

9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100

San Diego, CA. 92123-4340

DRAFT MEETING NOTES

1. All were welcomed.

2. Introductions.

- a. In attendance were, Cid Tesoro (County of San Diego), Tracy Cline (County of San Diego alternate for Cid Tesoro), Steve Smullen (IBWC), Mike McCann (SDRWQCB), Oscar Romo (NOAA), Kris McFadden (City of San Diego alternate for Tony Heinrichs), Jeff Crooks (Tijuana River National Estuary Research Reserve), Nicholas Surjan (CalEPA by phone), John Robertus (SDRWQCB), and Carl Nettleton (OpenOceans Global).
- b. Guests included Karen Bane (California Coastal Conservancy by phone), Bart Christiansen (State Water Resources Control Board), Jo Brooks (USIBWC Citizens Forum), Jack Simes (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation), Michelle Woo (AMEC Earth & Environmental), Ed DeMesa (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Gene Hillger (Ocean Blue Foundation), Ami Carpenter (USD School of Peace Studies), and Ilye Dzenovska (USD School of Peace Studies).

3. Updates.

- a. **NOAA Grant.** A decision on the NOAA grants has been delayed and will not be made until mid to late June.
- b. **Border Action Team.** (Smullen, McFadden). A USEPA/Water Resources Board grant, in the amount of \$200,000, to plan a Smugglers Gulch sedimentation basin was the subject of a conference call discussion with John Robertus, Carl Nettleton, Rik Rasmussen (State Water Board) Elizabeth Borowiec (EPA) and Doug Liden (EPA). The EPA representatives were looking for confidence that the grant would be used for planning to improve water quality and not for flood control. The documents developed and paid for by the California Coastal Conservancy to create the Goat Canyon sedimentation basin will be provided to Kris McFadden by Karen Bane. The \$250,000 Integrated Waste Management Board grant to put up trash nets and remove sediment from the Goat Canyon sedimentation basin has been delayed by the state bond money freeze. Permitting is underway. However, disposition of the sand was intended to be part of a study to test the impacts of placing this sediment on the beach. Because funding was stopped, work needs to be repeated and an additional \$500,000 must be found. Suggestions were made to

contact the SANDAG Shoreline Preservation Committee, and others for portions of that funding.

- c. **Cleanup Action Team.** (Tesoro, McCann, Cline) The URS characterization study paid for by the Integrate Waste Management Board is moving forward and should be completed by June. Aerial mapping has been completed and a map of historical channels has been produced. The \$700,000 Water Resources Board cleanup and abatement grant will be heard June 2 in Sacramento. Bart Christensen will attend on behalf of the River Team. Some of the money could be used to develop a temporary transfer site and to begin cleanup. Karen Bane offered to provide the River Team with digitized historical survey maps. The River Team should establish communications with Fran Spivey.
 - d. **Restoration Action Team.** (Crooks). The Restoration Action Team needs a smaller amount of funding to establish wireless monitoring of the valley, not the extensive monitoring imagined by River Net, but something more simple. Maybe \$10,000 to \$20,000 would be enough.
 - e. **Binational Committee.** (Romo, Surjan). Emily Pimental from USEPA has approved a \$40,000 grant to the City of Tijuana to pay for a trash and sediment trash characterization study in that city. It will include public meetings. The committee would like the Policy Committee to meet with Mexican officials in Mexico as a show of respect. It was suggested that Oscar talk with Nicholas Surjan and arrange any talks through the California Mexico Border Relations Council. There are challenges with that on the part of some U.S. agencies. El Colegio de al Frontera Norte (College of the Northern Border) has agreed to become part of the River Team. The Public Works and Urban Development departments of the City of Tijuana will designate the Mexican extensions of Goat Canyon and Yogurt Canyon (Los Laureles and ???) as conservation easements. This will be valuable in promoting cleanup in the future. Technical documentation is underway.
4. **Other pending grant opportunities.**
- a. **BECC Grant.** The Binational Action Team is proposing that the BECC grant opportunity with a June 30 deadline be focused on a study of trash booms and sedimentation basins on the Mexico side of the border. These would include before and after photos. Letter to BECC from the member agencies would be appreciated.
 - b. **State Water Resources Board Grant.** See discussion in Border Action Team item above.
5. **OpenOceans Global**
- a. OpenOceans Global is a non-profit organization founded by Co-Chair Carl Nettleton. He described the organization in this way: OpenOceans Global is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to resolving ocean-related public issues and conflicts by building and aligning communities around action-oriented projects. The organization is nonpartisan and non-political and does not focus on advocacy, but rather on working with

communities of interest to gather information, data, energy, funding and options that can be jointly implemented for mutual benefit. OpenOceans Global works on local and regional issues, like the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team, but has a long-term goal of building an international ocean community to aggregate the world's ocean data and creatively present it online using geographical information system (GIS) and other advanced visualization technologies.

- b. Because there is no organization available to accept funding for the continued development of the River Team collaboration, and because OpenOceans Global's mission is in part to address public issues and conflicts, Mr. Nettleton suggested that fundraising could be accomplished to continue the collaboration through OpenOceans Global.
- c. By consensus, the Policy Committee agreed that the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team would become "A project of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board and OpenOceans Global."

6. Glossy Brochure Draft

- a. The Policy Committee had a good discussion about the Glossy Brochure draft. Comments included the following:
 - i. Pictures are overwhelming
 - ii. Should show more positive, what it might look like
 - iii. Have one page of challenges
 - iv. Another page showing the potential for change
 - v. Point out the river valley is one of two California systems capable of handling climate change
 - vi. Karen Bane will provide a Coastal Conservancy quote and pictures of an imagined future
 - vii. A vision statement should be added to the descriptions of the four action teams.
 - viii. Add acreage and a map.
 - ix. Remove or rewrite the negative language on page 2 by focusing on the growth of the cities
 - x. On page 3 a discussion about the linear nature of the premises being unrealistic led to additional language being suggested to point out these changes will happen simultaneously.
- b. Suggested changes should be sent to Carl by the end of business on Monday, June 1.

7. Old Business

- a. Web site. www.tjriverteam.org continues to grow. Site has been updated with photos, grant applications, etc.
- b. Newsletter update. Suggested changes should be sent to Carl by the end of business on Monday, June 1. John and Carl will make final decisions.
- c. List of projects (not discussed)
- d. Agenda for plenary session on June 26.
 - i. Oscar will make a presentation on Mexican agencies and their work.
 - ii. Additional agenda items will be discussed via email

8. Other Business

9. Guest Comment.

- a. Bart Christensen. Bart pointed out that the next Border 2012 meeting will be held in Tecate on June 17. Others pointed out that there will be a retirement celebration for Bart after the meeting in Tecate.
- b. Ed DeMesa provided updates on the Army Corps actions to brief elected officials and will work closely with the appropriate action team chairpersons to coordinate the possibility of the Army Corps planning function funding the report necessary to identify funding necessary to restore the valley.
- c. Jack Simes provided a number of suggestions, including looking at collaborative work done by the Yuma Alliance and other border projects involving the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.
- d. Ami Carpenter and Ilye Dzenovska announced the Greening Borders Conference will be held on November 18-20, 2009, at USD's Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies.

10. Next Meeting.

- a. The next meeting will be the plenary session, held on June 26, 2009, at 10 a.m. The next Policy Committee meeting will be held on July 31, 2009, at 10 a.m.

11. Adjourn.

- a. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:30 p.m.

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