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**San Francisquito Watershed Council**  
**Steering Committee Minutes**

March 14, 2007

Introductions – in addition to the standard introductions, Pam Sturner made a special introduction of Youth Community Service (YCS) as the newest Watershed Council signatory. Today's agenda was approved. February 14, 2007, minutes approved. The next Steering Committee meeting is April 11, 2007. At this meeting, Alan Launer and Laura Jones of Stanford will give a presentation on Stanford's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) process including how the HCP will affect management of Stanford lands and what the next steps are in the NEPA process. Pam asked if anyone had any other questions or comments that we should ask Alan to address in his presentation. Various members commented that they hoped he would give an overview of the HCP process, its scope, how it connects to San Francisquito Creek and steelhead trout, how it incorporates anticipation of climate change, and how it will account for impacts on ecosystem services as they relate to conservation.

**Announcements**

- Trish Mulvey, Clean South Bay: Palo Altans for Government Effectiveness (PAGE) is holding a half-day workshop at which State Senator Joe Simitian will speak on how to be an effective advocate. The workshop will be Saturday, March 24, and it's a really fantastic presentation.
- Trish Mulvey, Clean South Bay: On April 10, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors will be holding a 1-hour discussion and Questions & Answer session as a follow-up to the Watershed Management Initiative workshop on Streambank Protection, Restoration, and Erosive Forces.
- Leslie Lambert, Town of Portola Valley: The Town Planning Commission will be beginning creekside regulations and policies workshops at which they will meet with individual homeowners. The goal is to try to get people on board with the big-picture goals of creek and property protection.
- Leslie Lambert, Town of Portola Valley: The Town has contracted with Balance Hydrologics to conduct water sampling near Rossotti's field to examine the issue of fertilizers and nitrates coming off of the field there. A request was made of Leslie to give a copy of the scope of the study to the Watershed Council for the LTMAP repository.
- Katie Pilat, SFWC: The Watershed Council will be holding two guided tours of its eco-friendly driveway and parking lot project on Saturday, March 24, from 10 am – 12 noon and on Sunday, March 25, from 1- 3 pm. The meeting location is 735 Homer Ave in Palo Alto. The tours will cover both sites (735 Homer Ave and Parking Plaza #5, located at Crane St and Menlo Ave in Menlo Park). Transportation is not provided between the sites.
- Katie Pilat, SFWC: The Watershed Council is co-sponsoring a talk by Andy Lipkis, founded of the LA nonprofit TreePeople, on Wednesday, March 21, from 7 – 9 pm. The talk is called "Helping Nature Heal Our Cities" and will be held at the USGS Building 3 auditorium at 345 Middlefield Road in Menlo Park.
- Philippe Cohen, Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve: Sunday, April 15, is Stanford Community Day from 10 am – 4 pm. There will be a shuttle bus from campus to the Preserve where community members can see the 19 research stations on the Preserve.

- Ryan Navratil, SFWC: Saturday, April 7, will be a Watershed Council volunteer workday. We'll be removing French broom along Los Trancos Creek. The meeting location is across the street from the Shell Station on Alpine Road in Ladera.
- Pam Sturner, SFWC: The Watershed Council will be hosting a stop on the Going Native Garden Tour on Sunday, April 29. We will be showing El Palo Alto Park in Palo Alto.
- Pam Sturner, SFWC: The May 9 Steering Committee meeting will feature a presentation on the bathymetry of Searsville Lake. Also Pam was contacted by Steve Kennedy, who has produced a video called "Cannonball Express" and would like to give a presentation to the Watershed Council on fire management. Pam asked the group if they would like to see this presentation at a future Steering Committee meeting. People responded that this was not a priority for a Steering Committee presentation, but that Pam should invite Steve to provide a copy to be kept in the Acterra library.
- Marty Laporte, Stanford Utilities: The LTMAP working group has been trying to arrange a meeting with the Regional Water board about the data requirements that would be useful to the Board and the TMDL process. Stanford will not provide funding for LTMAP next year if there is no clear indication from the Regional Board about what data they consider useful.

**Presentation: Update and discussion about Felt Lake diversion fish ladder project (Tom Zigterman, Stanford University)**

Pam told the Steering Committee that Tom Zigterman from Stanford would be giving an update on the Felt Lake diversion fish ladder project. The project would replace the fish ladder at the Felt Lake Diversion Dam on Los Trancos Creek at Arastradero Road across from the Alpine Inn. The current ladder supports steelhead passage for a narrow range of flows and is difficult for Stanford to operate. The new one would increase the range of flows at which steelhead can pass and be easier to operate.

Stanford has experienced some delays in the permitting process, and Tom is here to give the Watershed Council an update. The Watershed Council secured grants that funded the design of the project. The Watershed Council has an interest in seeing the projects move forward for the habitat benefits they will bring, and also because completed permitting and CEQA are part of the deliverables for its grants, which will be expiring soon. If these deliverables are not completed in time, the Watershed Council will be delinquent in its grants, which could have impacts on future funding. Pam noted that she had invited representatives from the Dept. of Fish and Game and NOAA to attend today but they were unable to come. She ended the introduction by saying that she would ask the group for input about what role the Watershed Council should play in supporting the project.

Tom began by thanking the Watershed Council for hearing his presentation and for their contribution to the project through the California Coastal Conservancy grant that funded the designs. He said he would give an overview of the project and then explain where Stanford is with the regulatory agencies and what the issues are.

Tom showed a diagram of Stanford's water diversions in the San Francisquito watershed. Searsville dam is on Corte Madera Creek, and the Los Trancos diversion facility diverts water through a 100-year old flume to Felt Reservoir. The blue lines show the pipe network that

carries water to the golf course and campus. There is also a diversion dam on San Francisquito Creek and a flume to Lagunita that was abandoned in 1985. Stanford is working on updating the fish ladder at this diversion dam as well and made improvements to it in the fall of 2005, although this structure is not part of the work for this project. Finally, there is a pump station that pumps water for use at Lagunita and the campus.

*Question:* What is the plan for Lagunita?

*Response:* Stanford adds water to Lagunita only if it is wet enough from runoff to support tiger salamanders. This year, there was no water from runoff, so Stanford did not add water from the pump station.

Stanford's potable water comes from the Hetch Hetchy system and its non-potable water comes from surface diversions and wells.

The Los Trancos diversion, Felt Lake, and San Francisquito Creek pump station facilities are the subject of this project. Tom showed a map with blue lines indicating the distribution system of water to campus. Stanford installed an Alaskan Steep Pass fish ladder at the Los Trancos diversion in 1995. This ladder allows steelhead to pass upstream and downstream. Under its license 1723, Stanford is permitted to divert water from December – April. When flows fall in the range of 3 – 8 cubic feet per second (cfs), Stanford opens the fish ladder. The flume that carries water to Felt Reservoir has a 40 cfs limit.

Since the fish ladder was installed, Stanford has never been able to divert the full 40 cfs, even in high flows, so it's had to divert from low flows. There was originally a screen that dropped out during high flows that allowed higher diversion rates, but then it was discovered that fish could get through too (to the flume to Felt Reservoir), so this screen was welded on, which reduced diversion rates considerably.

In 2004, Stanford proposed a new kind of fish ladder that would have a switchback ladder and a control gate that would allow fish passage down to a low flow of 1 cfs (vs. the current 3 cfs). This switchback ladder would become the normal creek flow path at low flows. At higher flows, gates would come down to limit flow to the ladder, allowing more efficient flow to Felt Reservoir at high flows, and thus reducing the diversion of low flows. The new fish ladder would be open 100% of the time and there would be no bypass channel.

The Department of Fish and Game's (DFG's) response to the proposal was that the bypass flows (flows down the switchback ladder) were insufficient; they wanted 5 cfs bypass. Stanford's response was that if they reduced surface diversion at the Los Trancos diversion dam, they needed to make up for it somewhere else in the system. They then added an upgrade to the San Francisquito Creek pump station facility to the proposal to be able to take more of the high flows at that location. However, taking more flows in the winter when the creek is highest and less in the spring when the creek is lower meant they needed a place to store more winter flows. So Stanford proposed excavating out the 100 acre-feet of Felt Reservoir storage volume that had been lost over time to sedimentation, which would restore it to its original (1928) capacity. Stanford has long standing water rights for each diversion. At the Los Trancos diversion, the maximum amount is 900 acre-feet per year. Flow from other diversion points can also be stored

in Felt Reservoir. The changes included in the Stanford proposal would not result in more water being diverted; they would just change the timing of the diversion so that more water is diverted in a shorter time during high flows. Stanford's water rights are from pre-1914 and there are not all the same numerical limits as post-1914 rights. The excavation spoils from Felt Reservoir will be stored on undeveloped Stanford land.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), who along with DFG must approve the proposal for it to be implemented, came up with a flow diversion plan for required bypass flows in the creek and allowed diversions as a function of creek flow. Tom presented this information in a table on a poster board. This information would go into a controller device that would automatically operate the diversion facilities (gates, etc.). The enhancements of the proposed plan are that it would increase the bypass flows down Los Trancos Creek and San Francisquito Creek and improve steelhead migration conditions. Tom then showed a table comparing existing to proposed flow conditions in Los Trancos Creek, and showed that for all times of the year and under all conditions, the flows that are part of the new plan are enhancements to steelhead. Another table showed that the pre-attraction flows (the flows steelhead would feel in the Bay at the mouth of the creek) included in the new plan are also all improvements over existing conditions. This was how the proposal stood as of February 2006.

Tom then pointed out several differences in perspective between Stanford and DFG. He said that Stanford was trying to meet its water supply needs and provide what is needed for steelhead migration, while the agencies were trying to maximize conditions for steelhead, in other words to get as much bypass flow as they could get Stanford to give. He said that the agencies wanted to get into a water rights conversation and talk about Stanford's water needs rather than focusing on steelhead's needs.

Tom stressed that with this suite of projects, called the Steelhead Habitat Enhancement Project (SHEP), Stanford is not trying to restore pre-1995 diversions, it's just trying to not go less than current diversions. It is worth it to Stanford to do this project to solidify its diversions in an environmentally sensitive way that's set for the long term.

By April of 2006, Stanford agreed to all of the diversion requirements proposed by the agencies. In the year since that time, DFG has not granted the permit. The outstanding issue has been disagreement over the language used in the permit. In DFG's draft Streambed Alteration Agreement from July 2006, they omitted Stanford's project description and permit application write-up and used their own language. DFG's description refers to existing diversions as new diversions and bypass flows required to support steelhead, while Stanford's description refers to existing diversions and enhancing already-existing bypass flows that presently support steelhead.

Stanford has since asked to meet with DFG upper management. Stanford and DFG now have agreement on all flow requirements, bypass timing, and using the Stanford project description and application as part of the agreement. The remaining issues are (1) that DFG wants Stanford to sign the agreement before they start CEQA, which Stanford doesn't want to do because it doesn't know the conditions that will come out of the CEQA process, and (2) that DFG wants Stanford to agree that the bypass flows it has agreed to are required for steelhead. Stanford has

agreed to provide these bypass flows; however, its biologists do not agree that these flows are required to support the steelhead population.

The DFG upper management are supposed to release a new draft Streambed Alteration Agreement next week. Stanford wants a 20-year agreement instead of a 5-year agreement. They feel that this is a long-term solution requiring long-term monitoring, so it requires a long-term agreement. This agreement must be signed by June or the project cannot be built this year. Tom then showed a poster board that listed all the applications and studies that have been submitted in support of the proposal.

Tom asked the Steering Committee if they would consider writing a letter to the Acting Regional Manager of the Bay-Delta Region, Chuck Armor, to ask DFG staff to process the remaining issues in a timely way.

After the end of Tom's presentation, Pam reminded the group that this was only one perspective on the situation. Pam invited representatives of both DFG and NMFS to come to today's meeting, but they were not able to make it.

*Question:* In the discussion about attraction flows, does 5 cfs at the Los Trancos Creek diversion mean 10 cfs in the San Francisquito mainstem?

*Response:* The attraction flows agreed upon were 8 cfs in Los Trancos, and under these conditions, there are usually 20-30 cfs in the mainstem at the Bay.

*Question:* Where will the excavation spoils from Felt Reservoir be disposed? Could they be used for the salt ponds or for levees in East Palo Alto?

*Response:* Onsite on some undeveloped land, unless anyone else wants them. The material is probably not good enough for use in the salt pond project.

*Question:* What problems will Stanford face if they do not get to construction this year?

*Response:* Stanford is currently holding funding for the project. If construction doesn't happen this year they may or may not be able to hold on to that funding. Also, construction costs escalate by 10-15% per year, so each year that the project doesn't happen it becomes more expensive.

Pam asked the group what role the Watershed Council should play in supporting the project. People responded that the Watershed Council should write a letter to Chuck Armor of DFG asking them to respond to Stanford's permit application in a timely fashion.

*Question:* When are the Watershed Council's grants expiring?

*Response from Pam Sturner:* One expires in June 2007 and the other in March 2008.

*Comment:* This information should be included in our letter.

The group supported the idea of a letter asking DFG to respond in a timely fashion, and include the information that the Watershed Council is risking non-completion of two grants, and that delays will result in increase project costs and may put the whole project at risk. Trish Mulvey

offered to be part of the group that writes the letter. Tom will email Pam Chuck Armor's contact information, and the letter will have a regular correspondence review by the Steering Committee.

**Presentation and discussion: Inputs to SFWC's mission and vision** (Pam Sturmer and Strategic Planning Committee members)

Pam announced that she was happy to be bringing the group the first report from the Strategic Planning Committee. The Committee has met twice since the last Steering Committee meeting and have produced a new draft mission statement and elements of a vision statement. The goal of today's presentation is to get the group's feedback on these items to see if the Strategic Planning Committee is going in the right direction with these items. If yes, Pam will put the statements out to the group for correspondence review to be adopted as drafts at the April 11 meeting. If not, the Strategic Planning Committee will continue to work on them.

Brad Eggleston, a member of the Strategic Planning Committee presented the new draft mission statement. Brad passed around handouts that described key inputs the Committee considered in putting together the new draft mission statement, gave the new draft mission statement, and inputs toward a vision statement, although a draft vision statement has not been written yet.

The Strategic Planning Committee considered the kinds of problems and issues that the Watershed Council works with as components into the new mission statement. The Committee recognized that restoration and protection of the watershed are key issues in the Watershed Council's mission. This is different from the group existing just for the purpose of networking and facilitating. It does both of these things, but with the goals of restoring and protecting the watershed. Another Watershed Council goal is to enhance and protect the human community, which means people and property. A third input to the mission statement is that tension on issues is not unhealthy and it is important to have discussion on difficult issues. The final key input is that the methods embraced by the Watershed Council, such as networking, facilitating, and educating, are neutral, while the goals are not. It was recognized that education is the best way to preserve and enhance the watershed.

Brad then read the new draft mission statement: "To protect and enhance the natural resources values of the San Francisquito Watershed and to foster appreciation of those values by the watershed communities through education, restoration, and public outreach."

He then went on to talk about inputs for the draft vision statement. The vision statement is different from the mission statement in that it describes the ideal future conditions we hope to see 20, 50, or 100 years from now. The Committee has not actually drafted a vision statement, but the bullet points at the bottom of the handout are the things the Committee thought were most important. Brad asked the group if there were any ideas that the Committee forgot. For the third bullet point, "enjoyed and valued," he noted this point was fairly abstract, but that for the Committee enjoyment connoted access to the creek. For the sixth bullet, "Minimize conflict between people and natural watershed processes," he noted that this was primarily regarding flooding. Someone asked what the seventh bullet, "Dynamic equilibrium," meant to the Committee. Brad and other committee members responded that the Committee wanted to incorporate the idea of balance between human communities and natural processes, but thought

that the word “balance” implied a snapshot of conditions at one point in time, while “dynamic equilibrium” implied adapting as conditions change over time.

*Question:* Isn't all of this in the Vision document that we did in 2005? Is it worth redoing all of this?

*Response:* The Vision document was the vision for the whole watershed. When we wrote it, we recognized that we also needed to have a vision for the organization to help us determine what direction to take in the future.

*Question:* How long do you expect the vision statement to be – what will it look like?

*Response:* It could be bullets or sentences... it should represent the future conditions we hope our work will yield.

*Comment:* And these conditions could be internal to the organization or external to the outside world.

Pam asked the group if the new draft mission statement looks like our organization, and if anything is missing. She also thanked Brad for the concise, organized summary of the all the work that the group had put into these statements.

*Comment:* The Watershed Council's most important priorities are outreach and education, but the point of these efforts are to enhance the natural resources. Doesn't this make us an advocacy group?

*Response:* In the inputs to the mission statement, we recognized that our goals are advocacy-oriented, but our methods are not.

*Question:* Should our work with the agencies and Stanford University to work proactively together on creek issues be in the mission statement?

*Comment:* I want the Watershed Council to be the organization that people come to for trusted advice about the creek.

*Response:* Some of these ideas could go into either the vision statement or values statement. For example, one of the components of the vision statement could be that we see ourselves as the place people come to for advice, while one of our values statements could be that we value collaboration and working proactively with agencies and property owners.

*Question:* What is a “natural resources value?” I think this part of the mission statement is a little confusing since there could be many interpretations of the meaning.

*Response from Philippe Cohen (Strategic Planning Committee member):* The word “values” was meant to refer to all the different kinds of values of the natural resources – economic, recreational, environmental services, historical, etc. It acknowledges that people are part of the system; removing “values” leaves people out of the sentence.

Pam then asked the group to think of a Watershed Council activity, and gave Steering Committee meetings as an example, and ask themselves if there is anything we do as part of this activity that is not covered by this mission statement and vision statement inputs.

*Comment:* I'm not sure if the idea of two-way information exchange between Steering Committee members is covered. The mission includes "outreach" and "education," which feels more like one-way transmission on information (from the Watershed Council to the community).

*Response:* Could this fit into the vision statement bullet about having connection and understanding as a goal?

*Comment:* That is very broad and doesn't signify information exchange to me.

*Comment:* Information exchange is a big part of what this group does and I think it's worth bringing in at the mission statement level.

*Comment:* Maybe in place of "public outreach," it should say "engagement," or somehow include the words "forum" or "dialogue."

*Comment:* I value that this is a neutral, safe place to talk about polarizing issues and to be able to not take sides.

*Response:* That is good input for the vision or values statements.

*Comment:* I would use the word "community" instead of "communities" to signify that we are all part of the same watershed community.

*Response:* The word "communities" was chosen to represent different kinds of communities, including the natural and human communities.

*Comment:* Maybe changing "by" to "within" would help.

The Steering Committee agreed that there is no disagreement over the direction of these statements, just over the clarity of some of the words. Pam asked that everyone send any additional comments about either statement to her by next Monday (3/19) at noon.

## **Staff reports**

Ryan Navratil, Field Coordinator: Ryan said that the French broom removal workday the previous Saturday at Rossotti's was lots of fun and that the group removed regrowth of broom to reduce the seed bank where we had done work in the past, but also tackled some mature plants in a new area where we had not pulled broom before behind the soccer field. Next month's workday on Saturday, April 7 will be another broom pull at a site across the street from the Shell Station on Alpine Road in Ladera.

*Comment from Marge DeStaebler, Portola Valley Conservation Committee member:* The Town estimated that the broom removal work at this site would be worth \$3,000 - \$4,000 for the Town to have it done.

Ryan also said that he has been doing some extra planting and watering of revegetation sites in preparation for the Going Native garden tour at the end of April.

*Question:* How's the revegetation site monitoring coming?

*Response:* We will have plant data next month. It is much easier and more accurate to collect data when the plants are in flower.

Katie Pilat, Restoration Projects Manager: Katie has primarily been working on publicity for the eco-friendly driveway and parking lot tours and the “Helping Nature Heal Our Cities” talk by Andy Lipkis.

Pam Sturner, Coordinator: Pam has been working for the last month on the strategic planning process and is trying to keep the tight schedule. She has also been doing planning for the Andy Lipkis event, and talked with Andy to ask him to address the topic of how to get stakeholders to work together and to describe the techniques worked in Los Angeles. She has also been doing grant writing and funding requests for local agencies.

### **Continuing Business (Trish Mulvey)**

Santa Clara Valley Water Resources Collaborative: The Water District ordinance that gives permitting authority for creekside projects to the local municipalities went into effect March 1. Most municipalities have adopted the recommended policies, codes, and ordinance changes. At the March 22 meeting, the Collaborative will discuss how to coordinate on compliance issues that the Water District needs to refer to the cities, and who to contact in the case of the five common bad behaviors based on Community Project Review logs: dumping (trash and green waste), drainage (erosion and pools), construction (during and after), encroachment, and grading and slope failures.

Watershed Management Initiative: The WMI was briefed on the Santa Clara County Habitat Conservation Plan at its last meeting. Specific species conservation plans should be out in the next few months. The June meeting will be used to plan the annual retreat.

Miscellaneous: Trish has Greg Zlotnick’s copy of the KQED California Water Series. Katie will watch it, then give it Marty.

### **In attendance:**

Trish Mulvey – SFWC volunteer  
Jonathan Owens – Balance Hydrologics  
Art Kraemer – Crescent Park Neighborhood Association  
Kevin Murray – SFCJPA  
Katie Pilat – SFWC  
Tom Zigterman – Stanford University  
Darrin Gambelin – Stanford Linear Accelerator Center  
Leslie Lambert – Town of Portola Valley  
Brad Eggleston – City of Palo Alto  
Philippe S. Cohen – Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, Stanford University  
Ryan Navratil – SFWC  
Bill Springer – SCVWD  
Marty Laporte – Stanford Utilities  
Judy Dauberman – YCS  
Marge DeStaebler – PV Conservation Committee

Julie Skelton – Stanford Real Estate  
Jae Able – SCVWD  
Alan Launer – Stanford  
Pam Sturner – SFWC  
Jerry Hearn – Acterra

Minutes respectfully submitted by Katie Pilat.