



Meeting Minutes

Lower American River Conservancy Program Advisory Committee

July 31, 2018
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Sacramento County Board Chambers
700 H Street, Suite 1450
Sacramento, California 95814

1. Welcome and Introductions- John Donnelly
Committee Chair Jeff Harris called the meeting to order.
2. Roll Call
Executive Director John Donnelly performed the roll call and observed a quorum was established.

Present were:

*Tina Bartlett, Department of Fish and Wildlife, for Secretary John Laird, Natural Resources Agency
Kelly Fong-Rivas for Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg
Phil Serna, Supervisor, Sacramento County
Jeff Harris, Chair, Councilmember, City of Sacramento
Donald Terry, Councilmember, City of Rancho Cordova
Karen Finn, for Director Michael Cohen, California Department of Finance
Stephen Green, Senate Appointee to the Committee and President of the Save the American River Association
Jennifer Lucchesi, Executive Officer, State Lands Commission
Don Nottoli, Supervisor, Sacramento County
Corey Brown, Speaker Appointee to the Committee*

*Executive Director
John P. Donnelly*

Also Present:

*Liz Bellas, Sacramento County Regional Parks
John Walsh, WCB
Elizabeth Hubert, WCB
Colin Mills, WCB
Jessica Schroeder, WCB
Cara Allen, WCB
Celestial Reysner, WCB
Mary Ahern, WCB*

Chair Harris asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Harris asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak, seeing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 2018 meeting of the Advisory Committee (Committee).

3. Approval of Minutes – Action
[March 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes \(PDF\)](#)

*Motion to approve – Kelly Fong-Rivas
Second – Donald Terry
Opposed – none
Abstention – Jennifer Lucchessi*

4. California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), and the Lower American River Conservancy Program

Executive Director Donnelly discussed the passage of Proposition 68 in June. The Lower American River Conservancy Program (LARCP/Program) received \$10,000,000 through the bond act. Subsequently the Program received \$2,000,000 in this year's Governor's budget from Proposition 68 to implement projects along the Lower American River consistent with the enabling legislation along with the Program Guidelines. Proposition 68 also provided an additional \$287,000,000 for the WCB to implement statewide projects. State Parks, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and several conservancies were recipients of bond funding through Proposition 68. For CDFW as well as WCB, this will provide an opportunity to consider potentially matching projects along the Lower American River boundaries.

Committee member Brown noted there was \$1,000,000 in the General Fund from the previous budget, so there should be \$3,000,000 available for the Program in the current budget year. Executive Director Donnelly stated that was correct, there was \$1,000,000 last year in the Governor's budget from the General Fund of which \$975,000 is available for capital outlay projects. There is approximately \$1.975 million available through the \$2,000,000, after operating costs are calculated, leaving almost \$2.5 million for Program projects.

Executive Director Donnelly also noted that WCB will provide a funding status in future Committee agendas. This will illustrate the fund sources and status, with a running total in each agenda, presented in a table format to delineate funds available and monies being potentially allocated to each project. Chair Harris stated that would be very helpful.

5. Disadvantaged Communities designation; Proposition 68 and LARCP
[Memorandum \(PDF\)](#)

At the March 2018 Committee meeting, Committee member Serna asked that staff provide background as well as clarification for the Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) requirement within Proposition 68. WCB provided a memorandum today, which the Committee was given in their packet.

Executive Director Donnelly introduced Cara Allen, program manager for LARCP. Ms. Allen introduced the memorandum and noted the requirement that at least 20 percent of the funds of each chapter of Proposition 68 be applied to projects that are within DAC. Chapter 7 allocates 10 million to LARCP, and there are 11 different programs that are part of Chapter 7. For the 2018 grant cycle, WCB will require that at least 20 percent of the money

allocated be within DAC. WCB will update future solicitation notices if the 20 percent requirement changes, per any future direction from the Natural Resources Agency.

Executive Director Donnelly noted the Natural Resource Agency is currently working on the DAC 20 percent requirement across the departments. They have already implemented a bond accountability database where information is entered and the 20 percent requirement is tracked. They are currently working with conservancies and departments to determine how the 20 percent will be divided among programs. The database will show which departments have allocated monies into DAC areas, and will be able to advise departments so they don't fall short, following the statewide requirement of the bond.

Committee member Serna asked if the 20 percent requirement is a statewide average. Is it the goal that all the conservancies are attempting to meet across the state where there might be more or less in a different conservancy boundary?

Executive Director Donnelly responded that the 20 percent is a percentage of the whole. In the section which LARCP received funding (the entire section consisting of approximately \$160 million), 20 percent of that allocation has to reach DAC. Moving forward, if a conservancy funds projects with a 30 percent achievement under the DAC requirement, and a different conservancy or department might grant projects at 10 percent, the overall goal is to reach at least that 20 percent goal or greater.

Committee member Serna stated concerns about the possibility of having less than 20 percent allocated to DAC at the local level. He inquired about any measures available or that might be considered in the future, that would establish that the LARCP should meet, as close as possible, the mark of 20 percent funds to DAC.

Executive Director Donnelly stated there were a couple of things that could potentially be done to require all projects that you consider and move forward to the WCB be within a DAC. Also, this was illustrated in the guidelines and proposal solicitation. Projects that come before the Committee, which go through a scoring process and then a review process, will receive added points for the DAC requirement. The Committee could also potentially take an action that it doesn't want to see any projects that are not within a DAC; this is available for further discussion.

Committee member Serna stated his wish to encourage staff and colleagues on the Committee to think about creative ways to continue to meet and exceed the 20 percent DAC requirement, so they don't get enamored with different projects that may fall below the goal of 20 percent and leave it for a later date to try to make it up somewhere. He was concerned about the Program being at the lower range of hitting that mark, and falling behind the statewide average.

Chair Harris noted Committee member Serna's concerns, and commented that the solicitation for proposals (PSN) the Committee can require this, and Executive Director Donnelly noted that the scoring mechanism will provide a means to measure and evaluate the requirement. Because there are a number of DAC adjacent to the parkway, in terms of meeting the goals, we expect to be able to meet these requirements.

Committee member Green asked if WCB had identified the location of the DAC.

Executive Director Donnelly confirmed and indicated that committee members would be shown a map of the DAC of the Lower American River. This will illustrate how to access the information necessary to determine whether or not a project is within a DAC.

Ms. Allen detailed two definitions within the memo: one for DAC and one for Severely Disadvantaged Community:

Disadvantaged Community - A community with a median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide average.

Severely Disadvantaged Community - A community with a median household income less than 60 percent of the statewide average.

This information was pulled directly from the Proposition 68 language. To help implement this requirement, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) published the Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool to assist the state with administering Proposition 1 and 84. Those propositions have the same definitions for DAC and severely disadvantaged communities which Proposition 68 has. In the PSN, WCB will advise applicants to use this interactive tool to identify if their project is within a severely disadvantaged community. Ms. Allen showed Committee members the DWR website and demonstrated how it worked.

Chair Harris thanked Ms. Allen and agreed it was a very useful tool giving an abundance of information.

6. NRMP Report – Liz Bellas (Sacramento County Regional Parks)
The Committee will receive an update and status report of the Natural Resources Management Plan being contracted by the County of Sacramento. WCB also expects to provide added funds in a proposed grant to Sacramento County at the August 2018 WCB meeting.

Executive Director Donnelly introduced Liz Bellas. Ms. Bellas indicated they had finished negotiating the final scope for the Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) and plan to bring that contract forward to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors (BOS) for approval next Tuesday, August 7. On that date, Ms. Bellas will be asking for approval to file the grant application to help fund the NRMP.

Committee member Brown asked if Ms. Bellas could discuss the contractor chosen, and talk about the public engagement process for the development of the plan. Ms. Bellas replied they couldn't disclose the contractor until the BOS makes its decision. She indicated the scope of work includes several public outreach meetings throughout the process.

Chair Harris asked how the NRMP would be funded. Ms. Bellas replied that the funding will be a combination of WCB funding, in addition to local county habitat restoration program fees. Sacramento County considered funding it all with local funds, but took the opportunity to apply for WCB funds so they could have their local habitat restoration program fees for future implementation of the NRMP or to use as match requirements for Proposition 68 funding.

Committee member Nottoli asked a question regarding the Sacramento County Unfunded Project Summary (attachment), how was this list compiled, and what criteria was used? Ms. Bellas responded that staff reviewed language from the Lower American River Conservancy Program Act and looked at project priorities. These were grouped by priorities and reviewed by the Sacramento County Recreation and Park Commission. This will also be reviewed by the Sacramento County BOS for future comment.

Committee member Nottoli requested clarification about the projects' prioritization levels in the list (ranging from Priority 1 to 5). What is the difference between a 1 and 2 or a 3 and 5? Ms. Bellas responded they are listed as priorities but they are more like categories. Sacramento County made the NRMP a top priority per the language of the LARCP Act, and then they looked at the next line of items as being health and safety from their capital improvement project list. From there they looked at ADA improvements, and then priority 4 and priority 5 projects were recreational improvements and educational facility improvements that can bring in additional visitors and revenue. Last, they have their infrastructure repair as the final category.

Mr. Nottoli then asked if the groupings were from the legislation, or were they being utilized through the department previously? Ms. Bellas responded, Sacramento County looked at the language of legislation first noting that the Act required the NRMP be developed and implemented, and from there they were grouped.

Executive Director Donnelly clarified that WCB will be considering, upon the Committee's recommendation this morning, that WCB consider a grant for this project to Sacramento County at their August Board meeting. WCB has agendaized that grant project and it is currently on the WCB Preliminary Agenda. WCB requested confirmation that the committee would support allocation of a \$500,000 grant to Sacramento County for completion of the Lower American River Natural Resources Management Plan.

Committee member Brown made a motion in support of Sacramento County's request, and it was seconded by Committee member Serna.

Committee members Serna and Terry then noted that the Committee needed to ensure that the actual allocation of funding was agendaized in the future LARCP meeting agenda. It was decided to have an interim LARCP meeting in November in order to properly request Committee approval for the NRMP project to be recommended to the WCB meeting in November.

Executive Director Donnelly indicated that the project could be postponed to the November 2018 WCB meeting. WCB staff will schedule an additional LARCP meeting in November in order to have this item correctly agendaized.

Ms. Bellas asked to finalize her comments on Sacramento County's project priority list and noted that this was the capital improvement project list that the Committee had received previously from staff. This was the project list which Sacramento County had prioritized, and provided as requested previously. Sacramento County may have other projects they wish to fund with future Proposition 68 funding. Maintenance projects and others are not reflected on this capital improvement list because they aren't technically capital improvement projects and are maintenance projects in nature. She noted that the Committee should be aware that there may be additional projects other than this list, for which they might apply to receive grant funds.

7. Proposed Amendments to the Lower American River Conservancy Program Guidelines – Action
[Draft Amendment to Lower American River Conservancy Program Guidelines \(PDF\)](#)

Executive Director Donnelly asked Cara Allen to review the recommended changes with the Committee. He stated he would like to get the Committee's approval to move these guidelines forward and make a presentation at the next WCB meeting in August about the guidelines and the solicitation that is later on.

Cara Allen reviewed the guidelines with the Committee indicating the document they were seeing included the latest changes.

Chair Harris asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none. Chair Harris clarified that Executive Director Donnelly was asking for approval today to move these guidelines to WCB. [This was not a specifically agenda item.] To do that, are there any objections from members to move forward with just making recommendation that these guidelines be adopted by WCB? Committee member Green made the motion to approve. Committee member Brown seconded the motion.

Motion to approve – Member Green

Second – Member Brown

Opposed – None

Abstention – None

8. Proposal Solicitation – proposed

The Committee will engage in a discussion regarding the possible release of a Proposal Solicitation and timeline to see high quality grant proposals using currently available funding. [Draft 2018 LARCP Solicitation \(PDF\)](#)

- Timeline
- Project types to be considered
- Available funds (Proposition 68)
- Request participation of a small team from the Lower American River Conservancy Program (LARCP) Advisory Committee for review of grant proposals
- Dates to be announced

Cara Allen presented information about the solicitation and asked if there were any questions or comments. Chair Harris commented that he personally felt they were well written and fairly exhaustive.

9. Information items

LARCP webpage now available on WCB website.

<https://wcb.ca.gov/Programs/LARCP>

Executive Director Donnelly asked Cara Allen to show the Committee the LARCP webpage, located on the WCB website. He encouraged members and the public to use this webpage. Ms. Allen asked the Committee to send her any documents, pictures or plans for posting or linking to the Program website.

Committee member Nottoli said Sacramento County had items coming before his Board next week regarding the NRMP, and the agenda and project priority list could be linked.

Chair Harris asked if there were any other questions or comments. He thanked Ms. Allen and noted he liked the website and looked forward to using his newsletter to direct people to go to the website to learn about LARCP.

10. Advisory Committee member updates

Chair Harris requested an update on Proposition 3, and what the possibilities are for the LARCP, should it pass. Executive Director Donnelly stated Proposition 3 is the Water Infrastructure and Watershed Conservation Bond Initiative, on the November ballot. It would

provide considerable funding for many State departments and other conservancies. The LARCP is identified to receive \$30 million. Mr. Donnelly indicated he could provide information on how to educate people about the impacts and WCB programs which could be funded. WCB would receive about \$987 million. Mr. Donnelly encouraged the committee to follow it as it moves on the November ballot. Chair Harris noted it has the potential to be very good for LARCP. Committee member Mr. Brown suggested that at the next LARCP meeting, different community groups, nonprofit groups, and cities be invited to come in with their list of priorities so the Committee can understand the range of projects that are possible for LARCP. Chair Harris agreed and indicated he would work with Ms. Rivas to develop a Sacramento City list of priorities to bring to the next meeting. He suggested having the meeting in November, after the election.

Committee member Serna suggested that the Committee take a field trip, potentially next spring, to actually go out onto the Parkway – with a half day to understand the nuances and characteristics of different stretches of the Parkway. Chair Harris agreed and added that he and member Brown floated the lower American River Parkway from Watt to Sutter's Landing the past weekend, and the aspect from the middle of the river looking at the parkway is much different from the shore.

11. Future meeting dates, future discussion and action items

Chair Harris asked Executive Director Donnelly about future LARCP meetings. Mr. Donnelly stated that a meeting could be scheduled in November after the elections.

Executive Director Donnelly requested that members send their links to email lists of community members who would have interest in the LARCP. Also at their public meetings, constituents should be invited to go on the LARCP website and sign on to the subscriber list.

12. Adjourn

Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 10:30am.

Respectfully Submitted,

John P. Donnelly
Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board