



Gavin Newsom, Governor
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
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Meeting Minutes
Lower American River Conservancy Program
Advisory Committee
May 29, 2019
8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

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

1. Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance
Committee Chair Jeff Harris called the meeting to order and asked Advisory Committee member Corey Brown to lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then asked for roll call.
2. Roll Call
WCB staff member Mary Ahern performed the roll call and observed a quorum was established.

Present were:

*Phil Serna, Supervisor, Sacramento County
Dick Barbar for Susan Peters, Supervisor, Sacramento County
Don Nottoli, Supervisor, Sacramento County
Jeff Harris, Chair, Councilmember, City of Sacramento
Elizabeth Sparkman for Donald Terry, Councilmember, City of Rancho Cordova
Karen Finn for Keely Bosler, Director, California Department of Finance
Stephen Green, Senate Appointee to the Committee and President of Save the American River Association
Corey Brown, Assembly Appointee to the Committee
Cassie Gilson, Governor Appointee to the Committee*

*Executive Director
John P. Donnelly*

Also Present:

*Dianna Poggetto, American River Parkway Foundation
Liz Bellas, Sacramento County Regional Parks
Margaret Kashuba, City of Sacramento
John Febbo, City of Sacramento*

Sierra Williams, Formation Environmental, LLC
Lilly Allen, Water Forum
Mick Klasson, citizen
Elizabeth Hubert, WCB
Colin Mills, WCB
Jessica Schroeder, WCB
Cara Allen, WCB
Heidi West, WCB
Celestial Reysner, WCB
Mary Ahern, WCB
Alexa Dunn, WCB

3. Public Forum for Items not on the Agenda

Chair Harris noted that no speaker cards were submitted and asked if there was anyone who would like to address the committee. There was no one. Chair Harris then welcomed Ms. Elizabeth Sparkman, who was sitting in for Committee member Donald Terry.

4. Approval of Minutes – Action

[February 7, 2019 \(PDF\)](#)

Chair Harris asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 2019 meeting of the Lower American River Conservancy Program Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee).

Motion to approve – Phil Serna

Second – Corey Brown

Opposed – none

Abstention – none

5. Fund Status – Informational

The following funding status depicts Capital Outlay and Local Assistance appropriations by year of appropriation and by fund source and fund number.

(u) 2018-19 CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL FUND OF 2018, (6088)

Item 3640-101-6088

Budget Act of 2018 (80100(a)(3)),

Lower American River Conservancy Program \$2,000,000.00

Less Previous Board Allocations 0.00

Unallocated Balance **\$2,000,000.00**

May 2019 Board Meeting Allocation: (176,000.00)

Total Project Development: (499,000.00)

Projected Unallocated Balance: **\$1,325,000.00**

(ac) 2017-18 GENERAL FUND (0001)

Item 3640-101-0001

Budget Act of 2017 (Lower American River) \$1,000,000.00

Less Previous Board Allocations (525,000.00)

Unallocated Balance **\$475,000.00**

May 2019 Board Meeting Allocation:	0.00
Total Project Development:	0.00
Projected Unallocated Balance:	\$475,000.00

Executive Director John Donnelly presented the current funding status for the Lower American River Conservancy Program within the Wildlife Conservation Board. The Board acted on the recommendation of the committee and approved the Camp Pollock project. Additionally, staff have been processing the recommended acquisition project. He also noted that the incoming \$7.25 million in funds will be from Prop 68.

6. American River Parkway Foundation Presentation – Dianna Poggetto

[American River Parkway Foundation Presentation \(PDF\)](#)

Ms. Dianna Poggetto, Executive Director of the American River Parkway Foundation, presented on the programs and efforts of the Foundation.

Mr. Brown recognized the American River Parkway Foundation's important work and suggested that the Foundation staff shape their projects to meet requirements for bond funds. He encouraged the Foundation staff to meet with WCB staff.

Ms. Poggetto responded that it is very difficult for the Foundation to receive state and federal funding without a Resource Management Plan.

Chair Harris commended the Foundation on the work they are doing with Title I schools, as this work will ensure the parkway continues to receive 8 million visitors per year.

Executive Director Donnelly requested information on scheduling a visit to one of the STEM programs.

Ms. Poggetto informed the committee that they can call and request to schedule a visit.

Mr. Brown stated there is about \$4.5 million in the state budget for community access with an emphasis on getting kids out into nature, and that Ms. Poggetto could contact him for more information.

7. Sacramento Regional Parks Update – Liz Bellas

Ms. Liz Bellas, Director, Sacramento County Regional Parks, gave an update on activities. There has been a delay in completing the Resource Management Plan due to staff turnover and new information emerging from levee work. Ms. Bellas stated that she expects that a draft of the Plan will be available in September to the public. Ms. Bellas reported that Discovery Park and the rest of the park facilities are now open to the public, as Discovery Park was closed until recently due to high water levels. One picnic structure, the Alder, will need to be removed as it was damaged beyond repair. Additionally, there was a washout at mile 16.5 of the Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail. The County has been working with the City of Rancho Cordova as the

washout caused an issue with drainage and an outfall. The County has requested emergency permits from the Central Valley Flood Control Board to reroute the trail. Ms. Bellas estimated that the section of the trail will be up and running again in late June or early July.

Ms. Bellas continued her report by stating that through April, Regional Parks staff cleared 500 tons of debris and 2,700 illegal camps. The County received \$99,600 in funding from CDFG for invasive plant removal. The County will be working with the American River Parkway Foundation on this two year project. On July 20th, the Great American Triathlon will occur, following the same course as the final Eppie's Great Race. Despite lower attendance than usual due to weather, Memorial weekend kicked off the Kids Don't Float safety campaign.

Committee member Phil Serna inquired about the picnic structure and whether the Board of Supervisors would see this in the 19/20 budget. Mr. Serna stated that as a place that usage fees are charged for special events, the County will lose revenue the longer it takes to replace it. Mr. Serna requested that County staff provide a briefing on this issue separately to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Bellas said the County's estimate is \$400,000, and they were looking for funding. The County would be looking to salvage the existing concrete pad and build concrete pillars similar to the Oak picnic structure.

Committee member Don Notolli spoke on the insurance policies of the County and noted it might be worth looking at from the standpoint of the risk management and general services. He voiced interest in being a part of the conversation regarding the replacement of the structure.

Chair Harris noted that this year was a particularly high-water year. Sustained flows are expected throughout summer months from Folsom and Oroville reservoirs due to the snow pack levels. He wished the Regional Parks office well in their endeavor to get the structure fixed.

8. Proposition 68 Severely Disadvantaged Community Requirement Update
Ms. Allen presented an update regarding the Prop 68 requirement that 20% of chapter funds be directed to projects that benefit severely disadvantaged communities. The LARCP met the requirement through the previous \$2 million grant cycle, since all the projects recommended were within a severely disadvantaged community. If the Board approves each recommended project, then the 20% match requirement will have been met for the \$10 million total Prop 68 funds. For the next grant proposal cycle, preference will be given to those projects that benefit disadvantaged communities; match requirements will continue to be waived for those applicants.
9. 2019 Proposal Solicitation Guidance Discussion:
 - a. Solicit Interest for Technical Review Panel
Executive Director Donnelly thanked WCB staff for their great work on coordinating this effort.

Ms. Allen requested committee participation in the Technical Review Panel. The review period is scheduled for July 22nd through August 23rd.

Committee member Dick Barbar questioned if he was still unable to participate due being on the Recreation and Park Commission.

Mr. Notolli questioned the reason for barring Mr. Barbar for participating, as all the committee members wear many hats and Mr. Barbar's commitment and experience are valuable to the parkway.

Mr. Colin Mills, attorney for WCB, stated he was confident in his initial analysis that Mr. Barbar could not participate due to his association. However, Mr. Mills will prepare a memo detailing his legal analysis regarding the participation of Mr. Barbar on a technical review committee.

Committee members Scott Green, Corey Brown, and Cassie Gilson will participate in the Technical Review Panel.

b. Solicit Opinions on What Should be Included in Proposal Presentations

Ms. Allen requested feedback on the information provided to the committee in the last round of proposal presentations.

Chair Harris stated that the previous presentations and handouts were very adequate and extremely helpful. The consensus was that the presentations were nicely done, and no alterations were requested.

10. 2020 Proposal Solicitation Guidance Discussion:

a. Scoring Criteria

Ms. Allen stated that she and Mr. Brown have been working on a draft concept for an additional level of review to weigh cost effectiveness and magnitude of each project's benefit. Ms. Allen will email the concept to the committee members with a request for input by the end of summer. This will not replace the quantitative matrix that has been used previously, but it would be an added layer to help assess a project's ability to advance the four goals of the program (habitat, public access, education, and water quality).

Mr. Brown commended Ms. Allen for her work on this as well as her openness to new ideas. He stated this is intended to be a simple chart to help the technical reviewers see the big picture of how a project will impact the Lower American River Parkway.

Committee member Karen Finn asked about who would be completing this review and about the subjectivity of interpretation of the criteria.

Ms. Allen noted that there is a table that has some qualifying terms, and they will welcome the committee's feedback on how to weigh each item.

Mr. Barbar recognized the importance of this addition and noted the difficulty in quantifying subjective criteria. He suggested the criteria be as objective as

possible.

b. Project Phasing

Mr. Barbar noted that in the last round, it seemed that applicants were not aware of the possibility of phasing projects. He requested an addition in the PSN to provide clarity to applicants regarding project phasing and partial funding. He wanted to ensure that the committee can move forward with as many projects as possible given the funding constraints.

Ms. Allen summarized that Mr. Barbar is requesting more clarification in the PSN regarding applying for planning projects and noting that the applicant can apply subsequently for implementation funding.

Mr. Barbar clarified while planning was a good example, he was also discussing partial funding for projects in which the work can get started, but it will not necessarily be usable by the end of the grant term.

Executive Director Donnelly remarked that the committee can recommend funding for a project that is a subset of a larger project, but he would like the committee to avoid funding a partial/phased project that does not result in a complete project. As a state agency, WCB cannot commit to future phases of a project with funds that are not guaranteed.

Mr. Barbar noted that the committee previously approved partial funding for the American River Ranch project to fit it within the allocated amount. He agreed that it would be ideal to have applicants phase projects that were viable or shovel ready for the next round.

Mr. Notolli asked if applicants who previously submitted proposals would have to resubmit?

Chair Harris stated since in July, it is likely that the committee will have about \$7 million to recommend that changes the conversation as partial funding should not be an issue in future rounds.

Executive Director Donnelly clarified that previous applicants would be asked to resubmit to ensure the process is equal and competitive, noting that if the committee or WCB did previously fund a portion that could be taken into consideration in the technical review, as well as during the selection process.

11. Additional Meeting Venues on Lower American River

Executive Director Donnelly stated that there are two items to discuss: moving a committee meeting to a venue outside of downtown and a tour of the Lower American River. He stated that transportation would be provided for the committee members for the tour. The public would be welcome to attend the tour as well but must provide their own transportation. He requested input in the next month or two regarding locations for both items so that staff could begin making arrangements.

Ms. Elizabeth Sparkman suggested the Rancho Cordova City Hall Chambers, which would be similar to the County Chambers, and the Aquatic Center, which has a nice meeting room but lacks some of the equipment capabilities, as possible locations for the committee meeting.

Mr. Serna recommended a walking tour of the confluence, middle, and upper sections of the Lower American River to get an honest perspective and highlight the different characteristics of each part. He emphasized the importance of seeing the consequences of fires in the summer as well as unsanctioned camping.

Chair Harris concurred with Mr. Serna's recommendation.

Mr. Notolli mentioned the need to visit Nimbus area, specifically the restored educational and interpretive Campfire Outdoor Educational Site at River Bend Park mentioned by Ms. Poggetto. He also mentioned there is a whole host of restoration efforts to visit at Ancil Hoffman Park, Effie Yeaw Nature Center, and Rossmoor Bar. He requested the committee visit places where investments have been made as well as potential sites for future investments.

Executive Director Donnelly stated that staff will try to get these tours set up for later this summer, acknowledging that committee members have busy schedules and the public would have to be noticed.

Chair Harris recommended Sutter's Landing Park for a meeting location, which could lead nicely into a tour.

Committee member Stephen Green recommended visiting the Sacramento State restoration project along Bushy Lake.

12. October 2019 Proposed Meeting Agenda Items

Chair Harris suggested a future agenda item on the nexus between flood control and the parkway. There is a large connection between the work the local maintenance agencies, Reclamation District 1000 and Sacramento Area Flood Control, perform and the projects that the committee would like to affect. The City and County are working together with the local maintenance agencies regarding homelessness incursions that are compromising the integrity of the levees. He recommended bringing in the local maintenance agencies to discuss the nexus between flood control, maintenance of the levees, and Lower American River Parkway programs that the committee looks to fund.

Ms. Allen reiterated that she would be requesting availability soon regarding the parkway tour for the committee.

Chair Harris recommended that a portion of the tour needs to be done via kayak, as it provides an important perspective of the parkway.

13. Future Agenda Items

The committee proposed no further future agenda items.

14. Adjourn

Chair Harris asked if there were any other comments.

Executive Director Donnelly thanked the committee for their support. He stated that he would notify them via email when the Governor's Office budget was finalized to confirm if the \$7.25 million of Prop 68 funding made it through.

Chair Harris stated that will be great news for the parkway and the committee. The influx of resources bodes well for the parkway's future.

Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 9:04 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

John P. Donnelly
Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board