



**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  
October 17, 2019  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.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 led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then asked each committee member to introduce themselves as there were many new members present.*
2. Roll Call  
*WCB staff member Mary Ahern performed the roll call and observed a quorum was established.*

*Present were:*

*Susan Peters, Supervisor, Sacramento County*  
*Don Nottoli, Supervisor, Sacramento County*  
*Jeff Harris, Chair, Councilmember, City of Sacramento*  
*Julia Burrows, for Mayor Darrell Steinberg, City of Sacramento*  
*Elizabeth Sparkman for Donald Terry, Councilmember, City of Rancho Cordova*  
*Kevin Thomas for Wade Crowfoot, Secretary, California Natural Resource Agency*  
*Christopher Lief for Keely Bosler, California Department of Finance*  
*Colin Conner for Jennifer Lucchesi, Executive Officer, State Lands Commission*  
*Corey Brown, Assembly Appointee to the Committee*

*Executive Director*  
*John P. Donnelly*

*Also Present:*  
*Betsy Weiland, citizen*  
*Michelle Stevens, CSUS*

*Milo Kovet, CSUS*  
*Mick Klasson, citizen*  
*Dianna Poggetto, ARPF*  
*Jenna Abbott, River District*  
*Laurie Weir, Effie Yeaw*  
*Liz Bellas, Sacramento County Regional Parks*  
*Sandre Dunn, Effie Yeaw*  
*Rebecca Fris, WCB*  
*Elizabeth Hubert, WCB*  
*Colin Mills, WCB*  
*Jessica Schroeder, WCB*  
*John Walsh, WCB*  
*Cara Allen, WCB*  
*Mary Ahern, WCB*  
*Alexa Dunn, WCB*

3. Public Forum for Items not on the Agenda

*Chair Harris asked if anyone present wished to speak or comment, there was one.*

*Ms. Michelle Stevens, representing Sacramento State, spoke in favor of Bushy Lake and invited the committee to come visit.*

4. Approval of Minutes – Action

[May 29, 2019 Draft Minutes \(PDF\)](#)

*Chair Harris called for a motion for approval of minutes, but there was not a quorum available since all members who did not attend the previous meeting abstained on the vote. Minutes will be voted on at the next meeting.*

5. Fund Status – John Donnelly

[Fund Status \(PDF\)](#)

*Executive Director John Donnelly presented the current funding status for the Lower American River Conservancy Program within the Wildlife Conservation Board. He then asked if there were questions or comments. Mr. Donnelly noted that there is potential for additional funding on the horizon, as SB 45 will be carried forward into next year. Within SB 45, there was an allocation of \$25 million specified for the Lower American River Conservancy Program.*

6. Committee Member Updates

*Chair Harris requested that requested the next agenda includes a presentation on Steelhead Creek. There has been a study conducted on the creek and the detrimental effects humans have on it.*

*Committee member Don Notolli thanked WCB staff and each of the presenters for their work putting together the first Parkway Tour. Chair Harris agreed with Mr. Notolli and noted how informative and fun the field trip was.*

7. Sacramento Regional Parks Update – Liz Bellas

*Ms. Liz Bellas, Director, Sacramento County Regional Parks, gave an update on*

*activities. Regarding Steelhead Creek, the County did enter into a grant application and partnership with a non-profit for a plan to clean up Steelhead Creek. Ms. Bellas hopes for a successful award and informing the committee at a future committee meeting. The County is currently working with the Water Board on an E-coli study of the American River. The study is trying to determine sources of the high levels of the E-coli in the river, as well as performing DNA testing to determine if the cause is animal, bird, or human in nature. A separate study's E-coli results for specific points along the river are posted on the County's website.*

*To date (January through September), the County has cleaned up 4,409 illegal encampments and 1,107.5 tons of trash and debris from the parkway. The Natural Resources Management Plan is progressing quite well. The consultant is working with SAFCA and the Water Forum for the upcoming levee repair projects. Ms. Bellas shared with the committee a draft of the webpage for the Natural Resources Management Plan. The administrative draft of the plan is in progress and the public draft is expected in November or December. Public outreach meetings will be held in January. They will be held in both virtual and open house format.*

*Repairs were completed at mile 16.5 where there was a big trail washout. Upper Sunrise winter detour, when there are high water flows and the County detours people through Upper Sunrise, is being repaved right now – hopefully it will be done by November but they are allowed through December. The Life Looks Good On You campaign was successful, and there were zero recreational drowning for the summer season of 2019. Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps received a grant for \$142,875, with the County providing \$35,714 matching funds. This grant, partnered with the project being reviewed today, will allow for a great start to replacing all the signs along the American River Parkway with signs consistent with the 2018 sign manual.*

*Chair Harris thanked the County for repairing mile 16.5 and Upper Sunrise. Mr. Harris also mentioned that the study of Steelhead Creek will shed light upon the E-coli sources.*

8. *American River Natural History Association Presentation – Heather Gabel  
Ms. Heather Gabel, Interim Executive Director of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, presented on the story, mission, and vision of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.*

*Committee member Susan Peters thanked Ms. Gabel and wanted to acknowledge the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) for the public/private partnership they have with the County. The County had a difficult decision to make in the 2009/10 budget year, where it was going to have to close Effie Yeaw, and ARNHA stepped in to take over and managed to raise the funds necessary to keep it open. In a relatively short time, ARNHA has evolved into a mature association that is taking care of children and adults in all of Sacramento County.*

*Committee member Corey Brown thanked Ms. Gabel. He mentioned that he*

*accompanied his daughter to one of the educational programs at Effie Yeaw, and found it to be one of the premier environmental education programs to connect kids and nature in Northern California.*

*Committee member Colin Conner also thanked Ms. Gabel for her presentation and mentioned that he will now make a point to visit the nature center.*

*Mr. Notolli echoed the sentiments of the previous committee members, and he commented on the lasting legacy of Effie Yeaw and the work being done by the ARNHA board.*

*Chair Harris thanked ARNHA for the educational opportunities provided to children, and he noted the enthusiasm that it sparks in them. A ripple effect may inspire the future generations to sit on this committee, and it will incite a desire to protect the parkway.*

9. Review and Prioritize LARCP Proposals, FY 2019-20 Solicitation – Discussion  
[LARCP Recommendation Table \(PDF\)](#)

*Ms. Cara Allen presented the six proposals and explained the inclusion of the additional measurement, Magnitude of Value.*

*Mr. Notolli voiced concerns regarding the visual aid for the Magnitude of Value. Ms. Allen explained that there are multiple factors being taken into consideration when reviewing the proposals as described in the PSN. Committee member Brown provided further clarification on the reasons for including this Magnitude of Benefit measurement. He noted the technical review heavily relies on how well the proposal is written, and this was developed to help give the committee an idea about the how much difference does each project make in advancing the betterment of the Parkway. For example, the planning proposals have the potential to lead to future significant or very significant implementation projects. He explained that the goal is that applicants will submit increasingly competitive proposals.*

*The committee members requested for future proposal solicitation discussions for the PowerPoint to be included in the packet they receive.*

A. Projects Recommended for Funding

1. [American River Ranch Parking Lot, Phase II \(PDF\)](#)

*Mr. Brown noted his concerns about the project having a paved parking lot when the Parkway Plan has policies regarding use of pervious surfaces. He supports this project, but hopes that any future projects use pervious surfaces.*

*Ms. Betsy Weiland spoke in favor of this project.*

2. [Discovery Park Picnic Shelters and Interpretation \(PDF\)](#)

*Committee member Kevin Thomas asked why the option for augmenting the funding amount was appropriate?*

*Ms. Allen explained that the project narrative did not describe consultation with the tribes, so the option to augment up to \$10,000 is to allow the work to be done to include the Native American interpretive panel.*

*Ms. Bellas informed the committee that the county has been communicating with local tribes about working with them on the interpretive signage. Ms. Bellas stated that there is no need for the \$10,000 augmentation, as the project can be completed as requested with the submitted budget.*

*Ms. Betsy Weiland voiced her concerns about this project. Ms. Jenna Abbott spoke in favor of this project.*

3. [Cordova Creek Phase II Planning \(PDF\)](#)

*Ms. Betsy Weiland spoke in favor of this project.*

4. [Where are We on the Parkway \(PDF\)](#)

5. [Bushy Lake Conceptual Restoration Plan \(PDF\)](#)

*Mr. Notolli spoke in favor of funding this project as recommended.*

*Ms. Betsey Weiland spoke in favor of this project.*

B. Projects Not Recommended for Funding

1. [Effie Yeaw Nature Center Facility Improvements Planning \(PDF\)](#)

*Ms. Peters requested the committee reconsider the proposal, as the project is a little different than the other proposals. The proponents are a non-profit that receives very little funding, and funds for the construction phase are secured. Ms. Peters requested that the committee fund the project as proposed, and staff work with the applicants to resolve any deficiencies.*

*Mr. Notolli echoed the sentiments of Ms. Peters.*

*Ms. Sandre Dunn and Ms. Lorrie Weir spoke in favor of this project.*

10. Recommend Prioritized Projects from Item 9 for Consideration by the Voting Board of the Wildlife Conservation Board up to \$7.25 Million – Action

*American River Ranch Parking Lot, Phase II*

*Motion to approve – Corey Brown*

*Second – Don Nottoli*

*Opposed – none*

*Abstention – none*

*Discovery Park Picnic Shelters and Interpretation*

*Motion to Approve – Corey Brown*

*Second – Don Nottoli*

*Opposed – None*

*Abstention – None*

*Cordova Creek Phase II Planning*

*Motion to Approve – Corey Brown*

*Second – Susan Peters*

*Opposed – None*

*Abstention – None*

*Where are We on the Parkway*

*Motion to Approve – Corey Brown*

*Second – Susan Peters*

*Opposed – Julia Burrows, Christopher Lief*

*Abstention – None*

*Chair Harris requested more information on the actual project as it moves forward.*

*Bushy Lake Conceptual Restoration Plan, Alternative 1*

*Motion to Approve – Jeff Harris*

*Second – Susan Peters*

*Opposed – Kevin Thomas*

*Abstention – None*

*Effie Yeaw Nature Center Facility Improvements Planning*

*Motion to Approve – Corey Brown*

*Second – Susan Peters*

*Opposed – Kevin Thomas*

*Abstention – None*

*Recommendations are conditional pending review by Sacramento County Recreation and Parks Commission for consistency with the American River Parkway Plan.*

11. *Contingency for Approved Projects – Discussion, John Donnelly*

*Executive Director John Donnelly requested that the committee consider now or in the future voting to approve a 10% contingency for recommended projects, as WCB is limited in what it can do once the AC recommends funding projects at a certain amount. This would provide a little leeway for WCB to move projects forward.*

*Mr. Brown voiced his support for this idea. Chair Harris asked the committee members if they would like more time to deliberate, and there was no one.*

*Chair Harris made a motion to approve a 10% contingency for approved projects. Mr. Nottoli seconded that motion. It passed unanimously.*

12. *Timeline and Funds for next PSN – Discussion, John Donnelly*

*Executive Director John Donnelly asked the committee members to consider when they would like the next solicitation to be released.*

*Chair Harris stated a preference for January 2020 to help meet construction time frames. Mr. Nottoli acknowledge the amount of work that staff does to put forward a solicitation and also stated preference for early next year.*

*Chair Harris then instructed WCB staff to move forward with releasing a*

*solicitation in early in 2020.*

13. Proposed 2020 Meeting Dates and Locations – Discussion

a. Proposed Alternate Locations and Times

b. Proposed Dates:

- March
- September
- October (Parkway Tour #2)

*Executive Director John Donnelly opened discussion about next year's committee meeting dates to the committee members.*

*Chair Harris wanted to know more about the timeline from the posting of a solicitation to bring projects before the committee. Executive Director John Donnelly remarked on it being a lengthy process that if started in January, the recommendations would be ready for the committee in May at the earliest.*

*Mr. Brown suggested that staff send a draft of the solicitation to the committee members, and the members can provide comments if they find it necessary.*

*Executive Director John Donnelly stated that staff will move forward with the proposed dates.*

14. Proposed Future Meeting Agenda Items – Discussion

*Chair Harris recommended that the committee add a presentation on Steelhead Creek to the agenda for a future meeting.*

*Mr. Brown wanted to thank all the staff who worked on this meeting.*

15. Adjourn

*Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 12:01 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

John P. Donnelly  
Executive Director  
Wildlife Conservation Board