

Blue Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake (Committee)

Meeting #15
9:00 am-12:00 pm
June 23, 2021

Meeting Summary¹

Attendees:

See Appendix A

Action Items:

1. Natural Resources will be creating a subcommittee to flesh out the scopes for the recommendations once the budget is officially passed, which will then be presented back to the larger committee. Volunteers should coordinate with Sam for participation on that subcommittee.
2. CCP will make adjustments to meeting summary correcting attendance of Lake County Board of Supervisors participants, and then show as approved.
3. Committee members to reach out to CCP if interested in acting as presenters at community organization meetings/if they have additional organizations they think would benefit from a presentation on the Blue Ribbon Committee.
4. CCP will finalize the National Water Quality Initiative Letter of Support and circulate for signature by Committee members.
5. CCP will circulate all presentations from meeting to Committee members.
6. CCP will circulate polling results of ranking exercise.
7. Committee members should think about which projects they would be willing to champion moving forward.

Welcome and Introductions

Sam Magill (Facilitator), Sacramento State Consensus and Collaboration Program (CCP), opened the fifteenth meeting of the Blue Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake (Committee) and welcomed Committee members. Committee Chair Eric Sklar provided welcoming remarks, noting the progress made by the Committee, including the funding of projects allowing modeling and monitoring projects to get started. He discussed the importance of the information that will be gathered over the next couple of years. He highlighted Assembly member Aguilar-Curry's work in making the Committee possible and thanked her for attending today's meeting. Finally, he extended thanks to Committee members for their time and effort over the previous fourteen meetings.

¹ Except as specifically noted, all comments reflected in the summary were derived from Committee Member statements. Where applicable, specific responses are provided to individual comments/questions.

At this point, the Facilitator initiated a round of introductions for committee members via chat. Attendees may be referenced in Appendix A. Following introductions, the Facilitator reviewed agenda items and outlined expectations for the meeting.

2021 Funding Update

The Facilitator introduced Assembly member Aguiar-Curry who announced that the Governor's May Budget Revision included \$5.7 million for the Blue Ribbon Committee. This is a major accomplishment and a good sign for the funding being finalized. The funding for the Blue Ribbon Committee was the only request Assembly member Aguiar-Curry made this year. In 2020, she refused to vote for the California Natural Resources Agency Budget because it did not include money for the Blue Ribbon Committee. She continues to be committed to advocating for the Committee. She acknowledged that volunteerism is not easy and thanked all Committee members for their continued commitment and work. She reiterated her eagerness to partner with this group in an effort to revitalize the lake.

After thanking Assembly member Aguiar-Curry for her continued support, the Facilitator introduced Lizzy Williamson from the California Natural Resources Agency (Resources), who expanded on Assembly member Aguiar-Curry's announcement of budgeted funds. While the budget is not yet approved, the funds being in the May Revision is a good sign for the funds being approved. The funds for the Committee will come through the Drought and Water Resiliency Bill Package, which should be at some point this summer. Using these funds allows the Committee to save the Prop 68 funds for the in-the-ground projects. If the funding does not come through prior to UC Davis commencing their planning projects by July 1st, Prop 68 funds will be used to get that work started. Once data is gathered from the planning projects, next steps for projects will be developed and the Natural Resources Agency will begin to think about how to sunset the Committee. The remainder of funds will need to be used by June 2025, with an additional two years to actually expend them. The Natural Resources Agency is soliciting volunteers for a new committee that will be responsible for drafting scopes of projects. She clarified that volunteers are expected to be Committee members, but if there are other members of the community who are interested, they could do so with the expectation that the committee would report back to the Blue Ribbon Committee.

The following discussion took place after Ms. Williamson's update.

- Sarah Ryan, Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians is interested in being a part of the new committee.
- Paul Dodd, UC Davis, stated that he was interested, but may have to delegate responsibilities to be involved.
- Eliot Hurwitz, Cobb Area Council, asked if there were broad budget categories set for the funds
 - Ms. Williamson replied that the funds were based on the Committee's December recommendations.
- Karola Kennedy, Koi Nation of Northern California is interested in being a part of the new committee.
- Jennifer LaBay, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, asked if it is expected that the Committee would have a new set of recommendations at the end of this year.

- The Facilitator clarified that this year's recommendations will be focused on projects that can be done while the planning projects gather information for later in-the-ground projects. The planning projects are expected to yield data in approximately two years.

Items for Committee Approval

April 1 Meeting Summary

The Facilitator asked for any edits to the April 1 Committee Meeting summary. Mike Shaver, Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians, noted that Moke Simon was incorrectly listed as an alternate in the meeting summary, which warrants revision. Eddie Crandell, Sr., Supervisor noted that he was not captured in the attendance because he entered the meeting late. The Facilitator said that these two revisions would be noted in the revised summary.

There were no other edits to the summary and the Committee approved the document. CCP will update and post the final summary on the Committee website.

National Water Quality Initiative Letter of Support

The Facilitator noted that all Committee members should have received and had the opportunity to review the National Water Quality Initiative Letter of Support being drafted by Lake County to apply for a grant for phase one of the initiative, which is \$50,000 for planning/pre-implementation "Source Water Assessment" development. Angela De Palma Dow, Lake County, gave a brief explanation of the program and why the letter is being written (see presentation for more information). She informed the group that the County also has support for match funds should the grants be received. When she finished her discussion, the following discussion took place:

- Brenna Sullivan, Lake County Farm Bureau expressed support for this program and Lake County's pursuit of funds.
- Ms. LaBay stated that Clear Lake has been determined an NWQI priority watershed, which gives the grant application more weight.
- Mr. Shaver asked how much the work done would overlap/be coordinated with the local water districts' work.
 - Ms. De Palma Dow responded that water purveyors are very supportive of this effort and the information that would be gathered would be helpful to them.
- Scott Harter, Lake County Special Districts, stated that he is supportive of this effort and dovetails well with the sanitary sewer survey that is performed every five years.
- Ms. Ryan stated that source water protection programs are important and that Big Valley Rancheria will support the proposal.

The Facilitator allowed Committee members to vote on approval of this letter using the Zoom features and it was approved by all Committee members. The Facilitator will send the letter out for electronic signature by all Committee members via Adobe Sign.

Local and Committee Member Updates

Clear lake Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Efforts

Ms. LaBay introduced several of her Central Valley Water Board colleagues who joined the call (see participant list). She informed the Committee that the Water Board has been reaching out to responsible parties to get information on phosphorous loading and whether activities taking place remain consistent with TMDL. Based on the information submitted and the Board staff assessment, it has been determined that irrigated agriculture and US Forest Service have made progress towards the 40% reduction goal of phosphorous loads into Clear Lake through the implementation of various management practices and projects. However additional activities are needed to reach the full 40% reduction. Lake County and MS4 permitted use have put together a calculator that they've used to determine their load allocation and they are putting together a workplan outlining various actions and a timeline for further reducing loads. The Central Valley Water Board is also working on an update to a technical memo that will identify next steps to assist those working towards these goals. An integrator report was recently released for public comment, which included the recommendation that Clear Lake be listed as impaired for microcystins, based on information made available to the board. Comments are due July 6th. Starting in July, the Board will be shifting into a planning mode for updating the TMDL to incorporate more than just phosphorous. This will also include a shift in staff, but Ms. LaBay will continue to represent the Board on the Committee. She also gave additional staff (Meredith Howard, Danny McClure, Micaela Bush) opportunities to introduce themselves as they will be taking on the TMDL analysis for Clear Lake and will be involved in the Committee moving forward.

The following discussion took place after Ms. LaBay's update:

- Ms. Ryan asked how the tribal traditional uses may be addressed in the revision of the TMDL. She stated that additional conversations with tribes are warranted on this topic because it is important for topics like subsistence consumption. Tribes are currently working to add tribal uses to the basin, which requires a process, so it would be good to know how this is being addressed.
 - Ms. Howard stated that there will need to be overlaps in the efforts. The timeline is likely to be late 2022 for tribal requests, but the intention is to have Clear Lake designated for those tribal beneficial uses.
- Will Evans, CLERC, asked if the updated TMDL will include a Use Attainability Analysis (UAA)
 - Ms. Howard replied that they are not ready to make statements about what will and will not be included.
- Charlie Alpers, USGS, asked for the status of mercury TMDL.
 - Ms. LaBay replied that it is mainly being implemented through US EPA superfund site work.
- Ms. Ryan stated that the process of determining responsible parties is important and not to be rushed, but the longer that information is missing, the longer people are exposed.
- Ms. De Palma Dow asked if the Committee is committed to being around after the new TMDL is completed. Implementation of the previous TMDL was very resource constrained and with more target nutrients and variables, there will be more implementation costs.
- Joe Domagalski commented that the USGS watershed monitoring and modeling include nitrogen, phosphorous, and suspended sediment, so these should help to inform the TMDL.

Community Outreach

Wilda Shock, Lake County Economic Development Corporation, informed Committee members of a discussion that took place in the recent Socioeconomic Subcommittee meeting around the opportunity to have members of the Committee attend meetings for local organizations to inform them about the Committee and the initiatives it is undertaking. She solicited volunteers to reach out to her and CCP to coordinate future events where Committee member presence and presentation may be requested. While one list of local organizations has been procured from the Chamber of Commerce, she also encouraged members to send additional organizations that may be interested in such a presentation. There were no Committee member comments or questions at this time.

Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians – Update on Cyanotoxins

Ms. Ryan provided a visual for the results of cyanotoxin testing that occurred on June 7th as part of the twice-monthly testing that is being done. There have been warning or danger levels of microcystin for the Lower and Oaks Arms. The tribe has also done testing of the private drinking water intakes on Clear Lake for free, and thus far there have been incidents of cyanobacteria in the tap water at a rate twice as high as the US EPA recommendation.

The following discussion took place after Ms. Ryan's presentation:

- Anne Riggs thanked Big Valley for their work monitoring the lake water quality. She asked Ms. Ryan to clarify the practical difference between the caution, warning, and danger levels? They all seem well above the "safe" exposure levels.
 - Ms. Ryan replied that anything below .8 micrograms per liter does not show health impacts. At 6 micrograms per liter, it is at the warning level and you should keep dogs away and limit exposure. At 20 micrograms per liter, you should not have any exposure and it is considered dangerous.
- Ms. Ryan also provided a brochure put together by Big Valley with more information that may be found here:
<http://www.lakecountycalifornia.gov/Assets/Departments/WaterResources/Algae/cyanobacteriabrochure2018.pdf>

Tahoe Environmental Research Center (TERC) Update

Mr. Schladow provided a presentation on creating predictive tools to evaluate future options and announced that the model previously presented on in previous Committee meetings has not been calibrated. See PowerPoint presentation provided for additional details.

The following discussion took place after Mr. Schladow's presentation:

- Ms. Kennedy asked if the model and observed for the other two arms matches the Upper Arm.
 - Mr. Schladow replied that they only had velocity in the Upper Arm and haven't done it for the Oaks Arm, but the physics are very similar.
 - Ms. Kennedy asked for clarification if bathymetric data will help further understanding.
 - Mr. Schladow confirmed that it would.
- Ms. Ryan asked if there was a lot of oxygenation in the lower arms spreading to Upper Arm, would it be an ongoing oxygenation push? How long does oxygen last to make a difference?
 - Mr. Schladow responded that the oxygen needs to be pushed out consistently. The idea is to use natural processes to carry the oxygen to where you want it.

UC Davis Center For Regional Change (CRC) Update

Jonathan London, Center for Regional Change, summarized the deliverables that have been developed for the Committee over the last year by CRC (see PowerPoint presentation.) All worked contracted up to this point has been completed.

The following discussion took place following Mr. London's update:

- Ms. Ryan asked Mr. London to confirm whether or not CRC will be part of a second phase of research with the allocated funding.
 - Mr. London confirmed that there would be and that it would be guided by Committee member needs.
- Mr. Sklar thanked CRC for their important work.

US Geological Survey (USGS) Modeling/Monitoring Update

Joe Domagalski and Charlie Alpers, USGS provided an update on USGS Water Quality Projects at Clear Lake. The projects included Scotts Creek Nutrient Erosion and Transport (funded by the Bureau of Land Management) and the Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine – Hg sources (funded by US EPA) (see PowerPoint presentation).

The following discussion took place following Mr. Domagalski and Mr. Alpers' presentation:

- Mr. Sklar thanked USGS for the work they are doing.
- Ms. Ryan asked if the USGS data on BLM land might be able to be factored into the TMDL evaluation that is underway.
 - Ms. LaBay responded that yes, that information will be considered. The US Bureau of Land Management has already included some of that information in their submittal and the project mentioned in the presentation is being tracked by the Central Valley Water Board.

Committee Discussion and Decision on Potential Projects

The Facilitator reviewed a list of projects that was initially developed at the April 1 Committee meeting and since refined by the Subcommittees. The goal of this meeting is to garner Committee support for which projects should be scoped by the Committee and Subcommittees for recommendation for near-term funding. He provided a brief outline of each project and invited feedback from Committee members. See presentation for details of each project. Below is a list of the projects and feedback received on each one.

SHORT-TERM

Kelsey Creek Fish Ladder Restoration

- Ms. Ryan added that a component of this project that was not included in the slide is the revegetation effort that would take place along the project area in order to address erosion.
- Ms. Ryan also added that Big Valley had applied for Prop 1 funding for this project, but did not receive the funds due to CEQA not being completed in time.

Tule Replanting

- Mr. Sklar asked for a ballpark estimate of how much this project may cost depending on the scale.

- Ms. Ryan responded based on her experience with the work that Big Valley has completed. She explained that this is a low-cost project where 100 ft of shoreline costs a few thousand dollars. And confirmed that a few hundred thousand dollars would cover a large portion of the shoreline.

Derelict Structure Abatement

- Ms. De Palma Dow added that some funds have been procured for this project.
- Ms. De Palma Dow also added that this project would address failing sea walls, which adds sediment and nutrients to the Lake.
- Ms. Ryan asked for more clarification on how the revolving fund would work given the County would be providing public funds for privately owned structures.

Trash Clean-up

- Ms. De Palma Dow added that this project as written is focused on urban areas where dumping is common. She would be amenable to providing more detailed information on the budget for this project.

Invasive Species Removal

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

Stormwater Improvements

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

LONG-TERM

Middle Creek Restoration

- Mr. Lyons informed the Committee that Assemblywoman Aguiar-Curry is helping lake County Resource Conservation District to get an extension on the DWR grant to buy the property, and this project is moving forward

Clover Creek Fish Passage and Creek Restoration

Supervisor Crandell explained that the County is being careful to make sure that there are not redundant projects happening on the same property.

Water Treatment Improvements

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

Erosion Control on Public Lands

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

Oxygenation Pilot Projects

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

Private Well/Septic Connections

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

Support Development of native Plant Nursery

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

Advocate for Closure of the Stream Crossings

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

Clear Lake Water Lab

- Ms. Kennedy expressed overall support for this project but highlighted the importance that it be a collaborative effort and not led by one group, but instead include all interested parties who have an interest in bringing a lab to the County.
- Mr. Sklar concurred that all interested groups should have a seat at the table when determining how this project moves forward

Citizen Science Application

- Mr. Sklar noted the importance of this project including traditional ecological knowledge from the tribes in the County.

Create Educational Materials

No additional comments were made outside of the slide presentation.

Mr. Sklar provided parting remarks before he left the meeting. He highlighted the importance of ranking these projects to allow for clarity of where the Committee's priorities lie. The Facilitator explained that such a ranking exercise was forthcoming, but wanted to hear from Committee members prior to commencing such an exercise.

Committee members provided the following questions and comments:

- Mr. Harter noted that the Lake County Special Districts is looking at a continuation of the Geysers Pipeline project that was done in 2000. There was a second leg of this project that was envisioned to go from South Lake Port pickup, through Kelsey Creek pick up, and down to the Geysers Pipeline and up to the Geysers for disposal. There is currently a request to Congressman Thompson's office for \$400,000 for a community-funded project to revisit the preliminary design report that was done 15 years ago and refresh it so it is more current. This would also provide availability for a disposal location for the Clear Lake Riviera area in case there is future development. He also commented that his Department would be supportive of the Water Lab project so long as the demand for services in the area are taken into account.

The Facilitator provided instructions to participants for the project ranking system, which included a link that created various polls for ranking projects. Each poll question was allotted 5 minutes to complete.

Poll 1

Of the near-term projects presented, how would you rank them in terms of Committee priorities?

NOTE: this information will be used to help guide Subcommittee efforts for 2021, but does not "eliminate" any projects from the list.

Results:

Project	Number of Voters	Average Ranking
Kelsey Creek fish ladder restoration	11	4.91
Tule replanting	11	4.36
Derelict structure abatement/shoreline revitalization	11	3.64
Invasive species removal	11	3.27
Storm water improvement (planning and initial implementation)	11	2.82
Trash cleanup	11	2

Poll 2

What additional near-term projects are we missing? (free form answer)

- Tracking plumber calls to residents on sewer systems
- Education efforts?
- Nutrient contributions of septic systems, mapping of the systems

Poll 3

Of the long-term projects presented, how would you rank them in terms of Committee priorities?

NOTE: this information will be used to help guide Subcommittee efforts for 2021, but does not "eliminate" any projects from the list.

Results:

Project	Number of Voters	Average Ranking
Water treatment improvements (study and planning)	0	0
Erosion control on BLM lands (tied to upstream monitoring/modeling)	0	0
Oxygenation pilot projects to reduce HABs (requires significant study)	0	0
Programs to connect private wells and septic systems to county/municipal water and sanitation	0	0
Advocate for permanent closure of in-stream crossings	0	0
Support development of a large-scale native plant nursery	0	0

Poll 4

What additional long-term projects are we missing?

None added

Poll 5

Which education, outreach, and research opportunities would you like to see the subcommittees develop/implement this year? Your rankings will be used to inform their work in 2021; this will not eliminate any suggestions from the list!

Project	Number of Voters	Average Ranking
Education center related to lake health (including tribal efforts and histories)	11	3.64
Development of a research lab to address lake health issues	11	3.64
Public workshops on shoreline health, HABs, etc.	11	3.55
Youth engagement for environmental monitoring	11	3.18
Develop citizen science applications for HABs, fish kills, cyanotoxin, etc.	11	2.91
Educational materials, signage, and physical outreach around the lake	11	2.73

Poll 6

What additional education, outreach, and research opportunities should the Committee consider?

- **More outreach and education on Hitch and native fisheries in Clear Lake**
- **Organized, scheduled outreach to federal and state public representatives on Clearlake issues**
- **A scripted presentation that committee members can use to engage the community at large about the committee and it's activities.**
- **Pros and cons of managed fisheries and fisheries tourism on the lake**

The Facilitator informed participants that the information collected during this exercise would be included in the meeting summary and Committee members should provide adjustments, questions, and comments related to the suggestions that arose from this activity during their review of the summary. Ultimately, the projects that were established as priority will become subject of scoping discussions and part of this years funding recommendation from the Committee. Further, all Committee members should consider if they are able to act as a “champion” for one or more of these projects and reach out to Committee Chair Sklar or CCP regarding their capacity to do so.

Public Comment

The Facilitator opened the floor for general public comment. Ms. Riggs expressed gratitude for the work that the Committee is doing. Ms. Sullivan asked about the upcoming meeting schedule and asked about gauging interest around in-person versus virtual meetings. The Facilitator gave a final opportunity for questions, and then closed the meeting.

ADJOURN

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Committee Members Present			
First	Last	Organization	Title
Eric	Sklar	California Fish and Game Commission	President, Blue Ribbon Committee Chair
Sarah	Ryan	Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians	Environmental Director
Jennifer	LaBay	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Nonpoint Source Program Manager
Scott	Harter	Lake County Special Districts	Administrator
Karola	Kennedy	Koi Nation of Northern California	Committee Representative
Wilda	Shock	Lake County Economic Development Corporation	Committee Representative
Eddie	Crandell	Lake County Board of Supervisors	Supervisor
Brenna	Sullivan	Lake County Farm Bureau	Executive Director
Harry	Lyons	Lake County Resources Conservation District	President
Mike	Shaver	Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians	Environmental Director
Terre	Logsdon	Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians	Environmental Director
Keith	Ahart	Golden State Water Company	Alternate Representing Today
Paul	Dodd	University of California, Davis	Associate Vice Chancellor
Committee Members Absent			
Moke	Simon	Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians	Supervisor
Linda	Rosas-Bill	Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake	Environmental Director
Irenia	Quitiquit	Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians	Environmental Director
Alix	Tyler	Elem Indian Colony	Environmental Director

Public Attendants and Staff	
Name	Organization
Lizzy Williams	CA Natural Resources Agency
Geoff Schladow	UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center
Adam Laputz	Central Valley Board
Meredith Howard	Central Valley Board
Jonathan London	UC Davis Center for Regional Change
Tracy Krumpen	District Director for Assembly member Aguilar-Curry
Cecilia Aguilar-Curry	Assembly member
Sara Waterson	UC Davis Center for Regional Change
Joe Domagalski	US Geological Survey
Bernadette Austin	UC Davis Center for Regional Change
Charlie Alpers	US Geological Survey
Danny McClure	Central Valley Water Board
Eliot Hurwitz	Cobb Area Council
Will Evans	Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC)
Rachel Kennard	California Rural Water Association
Taran Sahota	Central Valley Water Board
Micaela Bush	Central Valley Water Board
Alicia Cortes	UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center
Daniella Cazares	Lake County Water Resources
Jim Weigand	Bureau of Land Management
Angela De Palma-Dow	County of Lake Water Resources
Alexis Harrison	Robinson Rancheria
Geoff Schladow	UC Davis TERC
Sam Magill	CSUS Consensus and Collaboration Program

Danaka DeBow	CSUS Consensus and Collaboration Program
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