

## **Blue Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake**

### **Meeting 1**

10 am – 1pm  
October 10, 2019

### **Meeting Summary**

**Participants:** SEE APPENDIX A

#### **Action Items:**

1. Sacramento State University College of Continuing Education Consensus and Collaboration Program (CCP) staff will reach out to all Clear Lake Blue Ribbon Committee (Committee) members to schedule a site visit and meeting #2.
2. CCP staff will work with Karola Kennedy, Elam Indian Colony, to develop a site visit to the Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine Superfund site in 2019.

#### **Welcome, Blessing, and Introductions**

Linda Rosas, Environmental Director for the Habematol Pomo of Upper Lake, thanked participants and invited Executive Councilmember Sam Icaay to deliver welcoming remarks on behalf of the Habematol Pomo and provide a blessing.

After the blessing, California State Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry provided additional opening remarks to kick off the Committee process. She explained the goal of the Committee and its partner efforts is to ensure a healthy and revitalized Clear Lake environment; the Lake serves as the lynchpin for the community and local economy. After her remarks, Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry introduced United States (US) Representative Mike Thomson to further explain the work of the Committee.

Congressman Thomson thanked Committee members and public participants for attending and provided background on the physical setting of Clear Lake and Lake County. He highlighted the importance of agriculture to Lake County and noted that while Clear Lake itself is vital to the local communities, its physical state is an issue of concern. He offered to assist finding available federal resources to support the Committee's charge and the rehabilitation of the Lake. Finally, he thanked California Natural Resources Agency (Resources) Secretary John Laird for chairing the inaugural Committee meeting.

Secretary Laird provided background on the Committee and its goals. He explained that this first meeting is intended to introduce the Committee members to each other and the public and that future meetings will be designed for hands-on work to achieve the project goals. The Secretary acknowledged that the health of the lake has challenged state agencies and legislators for years. However, thanks to the efforts of local individuals and Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry, legislation signed in 2018 and existing bonds provide specific funding for Clear Lake rehabilitation and revitalization, including:

- \$5 million from the voter approved bond funding (Proposition 68) for capital improvement projects.
- \$2 million for a multi-year UC Davis study of Clear Lake including physical challenges and restoration needs and social/economic challenges facing the basin. This work is managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).
- \$15 million from various bond funds for the restoration of Middle Creek.

He noted this is the first-time resources are available for basin-wide restoration and rehabilitation work in this Administration. Assembly Bill 707 (Aguiar-Curry, 2018) placed this Committee under the direction of Resources. Resources' expertise in large-scale, landscape-level restoration and rehabilitation efforts makes it the ideal agency to house the Committee. Secretary Laird stressed that science developed on behalf of the Committee will be rigorous but will not stand in the way of applying lessons learned for near-term solutions to avoid a loss of momentum as administrations change in 2019. As a result, the ultimate goal and work product of the Committee is the development of a long-term plan to create funding opportunities for restoration. This plan will be a living document, updated as conditions and needs change with input from the public throughout the process.

After remarks from Secretary Laird, Assemblymember Richard Bloom, Chair of the Budget Subcommittee on Resources and Transportation, thanked participants for attending and stressed the importance of Clear Lake as a natural resource. He also noted that major restoration activities cannot happen without funding, and although money is difficult to find, he is committed to providing support for the rehabilitation of Clear Lake whenever possible.

Committee members closed out the first agenda item by providing brief self-introductions, including their names and organizational affiliations.

### **Overview of Committee Facilitation**

Dave Ceppos, Managing Senior Mediator, and Sam Magill, Senior Facilitator from CCP provided a presentation on CCP's role as facilitator of the Committee process and a brief overview of proposed immediate next steps for Committee and stakeholder engagement. The presentation is available online at <http://resources.ca.gov/clear-lake/>.

After the presentation, Committee members and members of the public provided clarifying questions and comments:

- Sarah Ryan, Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians, asked when UC Davis's final scope of work will be available for public review. She also asked when their work products will be available to the Committee. Mr. Magill responded UC Davis will cover their workplan in the next presentation.
- A member of the public asked if future meetings can be webcast or livestreamed. Mr. Magill responded CCP will work with Resources staff to record future meetings.

## Overview of UC Davis Research

### Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration of Clear Lake

Geoff Schladow, Director, UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center (TERC), explained TERC's role in the Committee process, and provided a presentation on some of the physical characteristics making Clear Lake a unique challenge for restoration and rehabilitation. He explained TERC's work will focus on the physics, biology, and chemistry impacting the health of Clear Lake, and noted that the recent fires in Lake County are changing physical threats to the Lake in real time. The full presentation is available online here: <http://resources.ca.gov/clear-lake/>.

After the presentation, Mr. Magill and Secretary Laird asked members of the Committee and the public to provide clarifying questions/comments:

- Responding to the previous question on UC Davis's scope and schedule, Dr. Schladow explained a final scope/contract has been approved by the CDFW. The work schedule may change based on physical changes to the basin, such as the impact of the recent fires. Future funding could be used to address some of these changes as they occur. Secretary Laird stressed the importance of managing expectations for future funding and noted that the existing contract lays out research requirements.
- A member of the public asked how the TERC team will work with the Committee. Dr. Schladow responded he would like consistent 2-way information exchange so both bodies are aware of work products and provide information to each other.
- Supervisor Jim Steele, Lake County, noted that Lake County has had major fires for many years. He suggested that 1991-1992 could be used as a baseline for future study, since fires then led to many of the same impacts likely to result from the most recent fires. He stated that physical monitoring is the key for identifying specific challenges and potential solutions. He also noted that federal agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and US Forest Service have monitoring in place, but more is needed.
- Ms. Ryan noted that the presentation mentioned data transfers from existing public SQL sets to UC Davis. Big Valley Rancheria has its own extensive data sets and would like to see UC Davis's data as it becomes available. Dr. Schladow said that all UC Davis data can be shared in either its raw or processed form, and that UC Davis welcomes further exchange with local agencies, Tribes and organizations.
- A member of the public noted that in the physics slides, the presentation lists the earth's rotation as a complicating factor in studying Clear Lake. Dr. Schladow responded the spinning of the earth changes the motion of large water bodies like Clear Lake; this must be accounted for in modeling and subsequent analyses.
- A member of the public commented that reports on the Mendocino Complex Fire have been released by federal agencies. The participant noted local agencies and the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board's (Regional Board) Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program have data specific to the fires that could be helpful for UC Davis and the Committee.
- A member of the public asked if the UC Davis team has reached out to Pete Richardson or Tom Suchanek regarding their previous research on Clear Lake. Dr. Schladow confirmed that they are involved in this current effort.

### Social and economic aspects of community revitalization

Jonathan London, Faculty Director, UC Davis Center for Regional Change (CRC), provided a presentation on the social and economic aspects of the UC Davis research program in Clear Lake. The CRC effort will develop a strategic plan to address key social and economic stressors facing communities in Lake County and will involve its own stakeholder engagement processes. The full presentation is available online at <http://resources.ca.gov/clear-lake/>.

After the presentation, Committee members and public participants provided the following questions/comments:

- Ms. Ryan asked if the CRC research uses the CalEnviroScreen data. Mr. London responded that it does and will also use data from the US Environmental Protection Agency, as well as publicly available public health, air quality, and drinking water.
- Supervisor Steele thanked Mr. London for the presentation and requested that CRC include reference to the unique character of Clear Lake in its research. Specifically, he noted that Lake County is one of California's thirty-five rural counties. Unlike many other rural counties, it is surrounded by wealthier, more developed counties and is defined by limited transportation corridors.
- A member of the public asked if UC Davis receives any of the \$5 million in Proposition 68 funding discussed by Secretary Laird. Mr. London and Secretary Laird confirmed that UC Davis has a total of \$2 million for its research. This is separate from the \$5 million Proposition 68 money, which is dedicated for on-the-ground projects.

### **Committee Discussion: Site Selection for Field Visit and Scheduling Meeting #2**

Mr. Ceppos and Mr. Magill led a discussion of near-term next steps for the Committee. Specifically, they discussed the suggested "site visits" for Committee members to visit specific, physical sites around Clear Lake indicative of some of the challenges facing the area. Committee members provided a range of suggestions for the site visit, but generally agreed that sites for a field trip should be broadly illustrative of challenges. All Committee members present agreed a visit to the Middle Creek area can effectively highlight a variety of land uses such as agriculture, off-highway vehicle recreation, littoral conditions, riparian areas, emergent vegetation, wetland restoration, and burn areas. They were supportive of holding an all-day session combining the site visit in the morning and second Committee meeting in the afternoon. CCP staff will work with Committee members to schedule the meeting/site visit (**see Action Item #1**).

Committee members also discussed a future site visit to the existing Superfund site at the Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine. Mr. Magill will work with Karola Kennedy, Environmental Director of the Elam Indian Colony, to set this up in early 2019 (**see Action Item #2**).

### **Public Comment**

Secretary Laird invited members of the public to provide general comments. Two public comments and one Committee comment were provided:

- Amanda James, BLM Ukiah Field Manager, provided a brief update on the recent fires. She noted that 80,000 acres of BLM land burned, including the heavily-impacted Cow Mountain. She encouraged meeting participants to contact her with any specific questions about emergency stabilization efforts.

- Tom Suchanek, UC Davis, noted that as the director of the Clear Lake Research Center in the 80s and 90s, he knows that a significant amount of historical data on the health of the Lake is available, particularly regarding methylmercury production. A link to a relevant 2008 report is available online here: <https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/19395582/2008/18/sp8>.
- Jennifer LeBay, Regional Board, provided a brief update on State Water Resources Control Board funding available for post-fire remediation. The State Water Resources Control Board recently adopted a resolution to fund the installation of best management practices to limit the water quality impacts of fire in Middle Creek and Scott Creek in partnership with Lake County Resource Conservation District.

**ADJOURN**

## APPENDIX A: COMMITTEE AND MEETING PARTICIPANTS

<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT</b>			
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Title</b>
Janet	Coppinger	Lake County	Special Districts Administrator
Karola	Kennedy	Elem Indian Colony	Environmental Director
John	Laird	California Natural Resources Agency	Secretary
Jennifer	LeBay	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Nonpoint Source Program Manager
Harry	Lyons	Lake County Resources Conservation District	President
Linda	Rosas	Habematol Pomo of Upper Lake	Environmental Director
Sarah	Ryan	Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians	Environmental Director
Wilda	Shock	Lake County Economic Development Corporation	President
Jim	Steele	Lake County	Supervisor
Brenna	Sullivan	Lake County Farm Bureau	Executive Director
Alix	Tyler	Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians	Environmental Director

**Meeting Participants:**

- Bob Schneider, Regional Board
- Karen Tait
- Lori Holmes, LUSD
- Angela Depalma-Don, LCWR
- Lisa Wilson
- Tom Suchanek, UC Davis
- Will Evans, Lake County Special District
- Sam Ica, Habematol Pomo of Upper Lake
- Olga Martin Steele, Radio Station KPF2 88.1
- Fred Feyrer, US Geological Survey
- Rick Orwig
- Peggie King, Peggie King and Associates
- Carolyn Ruttan, Clear Lake Environmental Research Center/Sierra Club
- Sarah Mussulman, CDFW
- Kelley Barker, CDFW
- George Spurr, Lakeport City Council
- Eddie Crandell, RKCBC

- Erik Gustafson, Lake County Public Health
- Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, CA State Assembly
- Assemblymember Richard Bloom, CA State Assembly
- Congressman Mike Thomson, US House of Representatives
- Jonathan Howard, Office of Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry
- Tracy Krumpfen, Office of Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry
- Angela Pontes, Office of Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry

**Staff:**

- Caroline Godkin, Resources
- Dave Ceppos, CCP
- Sam Magill, CCP
- Sophie Carrillo-Mandel, CCP