

Notes

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00. Present were:

Committee Members

Bob Gearheart

Dennis Hunter

Ted Kuiper

Dennis Mayo

Richard Trygar

Mark Wheatley

Commission Staff

David Hull

Patti Tyson

The meeting was facilitated by Ted Loring, Jr.

The focus for discussion on May 14 was conservation. About twelve members of the public participated in the outreach session offering up their opinions on issues that they believe should be of concern to the District. Following is a condensed version of the comments made by participants. The individual bullet points are presented in the order that they were offered and do not necessarily represent the position of the District or of the planning committee.

What community needs should the District address?

1. An anticipated rise in sea level is likely to affect the District and the community at large. It needs to be taken into consideration in the District's plans.
2. Efforts should be taken to more widely broadcast public meeting notices and to encourage attendance by interested parties. Specific suggestions include:
 - Provide longer lead-time for meeting notices.
 - Provide individual notices to persons and organizations who have commented on the Management Plan or other District projects.
 - Build an e-mail distribution list for notifications.
 - Authorize and request interested individuals and organizations to re-distribute meeting notices to members and other people on their contact lists.
3. The District should pay particular attention to estuarine habitats and foster both preservation and enhancement projects. .
 - Special attention should be paid to
 - a. Enhancing the sea-land interface,
 - b. Former tidelands and
 - c. Increasing their value as habitat.
 - Seeking the agreement of the Regional Water Quality Board (staff and Board, both) on a shared agenda may be essential to making any progress.
4. Particular attention should be paid to the efforts, pending and future, of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) and other similar entities.



- The District should help the PFMC to understand the economic impact of its decisions.
 - The District may choose to act an interlocutor, speaking on behalf of relevant interests or groups.
 - Common ground may exist with NOAA in the study of essential fish habitats, especially when it comes to assessing impacts on listed species and identifying best practices.
5. The District can play a role in preventing the introduction of (and combating the presence of) invasive species.
 - The District might publicize the problem and encourage others to become involved in addressing the problem.
 - The District might sponsor or coordinate projects with Sea Grant, Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Game and other interested entities.
 6. The District should facilitate improvements in aquaculture practices with particular emphasis on:
 - The environment,
 - Economics,
 - Viability and
 - Sustainability.
 7. The District should seek to enhance commercial and sport fisheries by, perhaps:
 - Increasing community awareness of the fisheries,
 - Participating in the designation of Marine Protection Areas
 8. The District should develop a policy regarding placement and maintenance of billboards in sensitive habitats.

What specific projects or activities do you want the District to pursue?

1. The District should survey the Park Street marsh
 - Assessing the effectiveness of earlier restoration efforts and
 - Developing or amending the management plan as necessary or desirable.
2. The District should work with other agencies to improve fish passage. Consideration should be given to
 - Tide gates and
 - Levees.
3. The District should promote programs and processes that will streamline the permitting process for maintaining tide gates and levees.
 - The District might facilitate the development of a master Coastal Development Permit that could umbrella individual projects.
 - The District could promote a rationalized process that consolidates the redundant processing required by the various permits.
 - The District might develop a facility for the combined processing of multiple, small projects.
4. The District might fund or facilitate studies on topics including



- Tide gates
 - Salmon and
 - The Black Rock Fish Assessment.
5. The District should develop a model, exemplary, storm water management plan for Woodley Island.
 6. The District should lead in the assessment and mitigation of legacy pollution in the bay, possibly in conjunction with the Water Board.
 7. The District should take a leading role in assessing and mitigating the impacts of storm water and other contaminants on the bay.
 8. The District should facilitate the development of a comprehensive plan for the future of existing dikes and levees.
 - The issues associated with dike and levee preservation should be explored and documented.
 - The potential value – positive or negative - of “decommissioning” dikes and levees protecting individual properties should be examined.
 - Strategies for mitigating the increasing regulatory costs associated with dike and levee maintenance should be explored.
 - The District should encourage support for relevant, beneficial projects.
 9. The District should promote the development of more trails on water and land.
 10. The District should promote community awareness of the potential impacts of a rise in sea levels and should encourage appropriate local initiatives. The Boston 2000 program might be considered as a model.

Are there any specific projects or activities that you do *not* want the District to pursue?

1. The District should consider alternatives to its traditional support for expansion of port use and related activities.
 - The District should assess the potential value of the port with lesser channel depths than it has currently.
 - The District should conduct a realistic assessment of the probability that a rail link will not be re-established (or that impediments associated with the highway system will not be removed) at any time in the foreseeable future. That assessment should guide decisions on how much effort should be invested in port development and promotion.
 - The realistic potential of the port to effect both the environment and the local economy should be dispassionately assessed.
 - A comprehensive and creative study of potential uses for the Redwood Dock should be commissioned.
2. The potential for Humboldt Bay to serve cruise ships is not perceived to be promising.
 - The only ships presently tempted to enter port are those that are being re-positioned or that are circling the globe.
 - Current law - which prohibits gambling on ships while they cruise between US ports - is a disincentive for ships to call at Humboldt Bay.



- The economic benefit to the local economy from a visiting cruise ship is minimal.
 - a. Revenues to local businesses and agencies are presently in the range of \$40,000 to \$50,000 per visiting ship.
 - b. The time in port is minimal, as little as six hours, which limits tours, shopping and other economic activities.
 - c. Visitors may tour the redwoods or other local attractions; but they have little time or opportunity to spend any money.
- The environmental impact of modern cruise ships is thought to be minimal.
- The District is continuing to market the port to cruise lines in concert with other ports on the west coast.

Do you have any comments about the mission and objectives set out in the prior strategic plan?

1. Regarding the Mission Statement
 - There is a continuing struggle to properly balance the values associated with harbor, recreation and conservation objectives.
 - It may be time to think seriously about changing the historic balance points between different values. It may be desirable to point more clearly at what constitutes an appropriate balance between competing interests.
 - The Mission Statement should better reflect the priorities inherent in the management plan.
 - As the manager for public trust lands, the District's constituency extends to all of California.
2. Regarding the Vision Statement
 - The District can properly locate a project anywhere in Humboldt County: in Shelter Cove, on the Trinity or anywhere that a compelling case can be made that a project will serve the District's interests.
 - The District should consider promotional initiatives, especially those that result in cooperative projects such as a web site re-design that consolidates and promotes access to bay and other relevant information.
 - The District should promote shared, early awareness of bay related investigations and cooperation between investigators.
 - The idea that the District should exercise a leadership role is still appropriate.
 - The District should facilitate wide scale participation in projects and studies relevant to its mission.
 - The District should consider the extent to which the Brown act takes the initiative from the Commission and delivers it to staff. To the extent feasible, the Commission should innovate and develop policy for the District.



Do any of your organization's major objectives for the next five years provide a basis for coordination or partnership with the District?

1. With the Coastal Conservancy and others, the District should participate in the development of a Humboldt Bay Ecosystem Management Plan.
 - It would be based on the Humboldt Bay Management Plan.
 - It would develop specific proposals for addressing two to five priorities articulated in the HBMP.
 - It would focus on implementation, defining detailed projects for which grant funding could be solicited.
 - Participation by Eureka, Arcata and County governments should be sought.
2. Knowledge of pending and active research projects being conducted by other agencies is sometimes minimal. Often it's only when the research is published that general awareness develops.
 - A clearing house for research ideas and pending projects would be desirable.
 - A web site or other utility might facilitate awareness.
 - The management plan calls for the District to take a greater role in facilitating coordination.
3. Proposition 84, storm water runoff and other issues present opportunities for productive cooperation.
 - Rebuilding the Fields Landing boat ramp is a good example. It would not have been possible without other parties joining with the District to define and fund the project.
 - Greater cooperation is likely to lead to greater funding for projects.
4. Issues associated with the land at the bay margins present opportunities for cooperation.
 - State ownership of lands at the bay margin is the most significant change that has occurred around the bay in some time.
 - Change may present the opportunity to leverage new projects.
5. The links with Humboldt State present continuing opportunities for cooperation on historic and emerging issues.
6. A number of agencies have spheres of influence that overlap the District's: the Regional Water Quality Board, the Coastal Commission and, perhaps, others.
 - Effective coordination with those agencies is likely to multiply the District's effectiveness. Conflict (or lack of coordination) is likely to diminish it.
 - A common agenda should be forged. That is likely to happen only if the District takes a leadership role.
 - Effective cooperation will require the District to develop strong relationships with the entities at both appointee and staff levels.



- Identification of shared objectives may provide the foundation for wider cooperation.
7. The Adopt-the-Bay program is promising.
 - The District should promote it more widely.
 - The District should expand its reach.
 - The District should improve follow through on specific projects, e.g. promptly removing trash bags after volunteers have filled them with debris removed from the beach.

Other messages for the Commission or the planning committee

1. There will be conflicts between conservation and recreation demands. Expect them. Plan to manage them.
 - When a conflict develops, engage early and bring all the interests to the table.
 - Recreation is most likely to conflict with conservation in the north bay, in the south bay and, specifically, in the refuge.
2. The context in which the District works has changed significantly since the District was formed and is continuing to change. The importance of environmental values and research is increasing. The District must anticipate the changes, and recognize the difference they will impose on how the District analyzes situations and what it ultimately elects to do.

