



CITY OF ARCATA WETLANDS AND CREEKS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL 2009

Presented at the April 15, 2009 City Council Meeting

Committee Members:

Bob Brown, Chair	
Dan Gale	resigned 3/31/09
Chris McAuliffe	
Douglas Kelly	
Todd Kraemer	
Vanessa Metz, Vice-Chair	
Chet Ogan	(Liaison, Open Space Committee)

Staff Liaison:

Juli Neander, Resource Specialist, Environmental Services Department



The Wetlands and Creeks Committee was established in 1992. The Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council, City Manager and City staff in matters related to policies, management and projects affecting creeks, wetland and tideland resources in Arcata.

The Committee is to have regularly scheduled meetings every month, on the third Tuesday of the month. Its seven members, appointed by the City Council, serve overlapping three-year terms and represent various areas of expertise, knowledge/interest.

The Committee had its regular meetings during the past year, as well as study sessions and subcommittee meetings. On February 5, 2009, the Committee Chair Bob Brown participated in the study session with other committee chairs and the Arcata City Council. On March 10, 2009, the Committee participated in a joint study session with the Open Space and Agriculture Committee. The Committee's regularly scheduled study session with the City Council, scheduled for October, did not occur. Committee Members participated in the 30th anniversary of the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary treatment wetlands celebration.

The Committee reviewed and made recommendations of the following items:

A. Creek and Wetlands/ Policies/Ordinances

1. The County's General Plan update.
2. Low Impact Development (LID) retrofits
3. The review of numerous City grant applications for creek restoration projects

B. Management of City-owned Creeks and Wetlands

1. Trails for Sunny Brae Forest and Baylands
2. Pre-mapping of creek zones
3. McDaniel Slough brackish pond construction and public access policy
4. Klopp Lake and Oxidation Pond levee repair
5. Janes Creek Fish Passage Project
6. Baylands Restoration Project
7. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grants for Jolly Giant Creek and Sunset Creek
8. Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary dock replacement

C. Development Projects

The Committee reviewed and made recommendations on the following development projects involving creek and wetland issues:

1. Zanzi wetland delineation and mitigation
2. Lorenzo-148 S. G Street wetland mitigation plan

3. Creek Side Homes Annexation Final Environmental Impact Report
4. Foster Avenue Extension environmental document and proposed mitigation
5. Union Street and Samoa Boulevard wetland mitigation

D. General Comments

1. Low Impact Development (LID) retrofits to improve the water quality/hydrology of the City's creeks that run through town, the City needs to address the existing stormwater collection system and incorporate LID's, bioswales, etc.
2. The Committee requests submittals (development plans, wetland delineations, etc.) for review by the Committee be submitted electronically to reduce paper copies and allow the Committee time to review materials before the meeting
3. As was noted at the study session of the chairs and the City Council, almost every committee was promoting/discussing trails and pedestrian access. Our Committee would like to participate in a comprehensive trails/walkability plan to discuss connectivity, maintenance, use restrictions, etc. as they impact wetlands/creeks

E. Future Tasks:

1. Review of the *Land Use Code* in regard to proposed revisions to improve implementation
2. Bayview Ranch management plan
3. Carbon credits for creating wetlands, or expanding riparian buffers larger than required
4. Consider holding an Urban Streams Conference in 2011
5. Review and comment on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
6. Complete setback recommendations on creek side parcels
7. Develop recommendations on recreational use in and adjacent to sensitive habitats
8. Continue to assist with the Stormwater Management Program and Master Plan Implementation
9. Update the website of past/current creek/wetland restoration projects
10. Incentives for property owners to implement LID retrofits.
11. Develop Standards Guidance document for wetland/steam protection areas.