



**CITY OF ARCATA WETLANDS AND CREEKS COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL 2012
Presented at the April 18, 2012 City Council Meeting**

Committee Members:

Bob Brown, Chair

Vanessa Metz, Vice-Chair

Douglas Kelly

(Liaison, Forest Management Committee)

Todd Kraemer

(Liaison, Parks and Recreation

Committee)

Chris McAuliffe

Jeremy Svehla

Ted Weller

Staff Liaison:

Juli Neander, Environmental Programs Manager, 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. Its seven members, appointed by the City Council, serve overlapping three-year terms and represent various areas of expertise, knowledge/interest.

The Committee is to have regularly scheduled meetings every month. The Committee held seven meetings during 2011. The Committee's regularly scheduled study session with the City Council was held on October 20, 2011 in conjunction with the Open Space and Agriculture, Parks and Recreation and Forest Management Committees.

The Committee reviewed and made recommendations on the following items:

Creek and Wetlands/Policies/Ordinances/Management Plans

- Draft Programmatic EIR for Humboldt Bay Regional Invasive Spartina Control and Native Salt Marsh Restoration (Coastal Conservancy is the lead Agency)
- State Water Control Board Wetland Area Protection Policy and Dredge and Fill Regulations and the City Comment Letter to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board regarding the Wetlands Policy
- EPA Water Quality Score Card
- City of Arcata *Land Use Code* - Sections 9.34-Landscaping Standards; 9.59-Stream Conservation; 9.64-Grading, Erosion & Sediment Control; 9.66-Urban Runoff Pollution Control; Glossary
- SWRCB Phase II General Permit – Review and Comment on the Draft General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit for Storm Water Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s)
- Humboldt County *General Plan* Update – Draft Biological & Mineral Resources Section
- CEQA Scoping for North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Amendment to Include Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Policy to the *Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region*

Management of City-owned Creeks and Wetlands

1. Participated in development of Arcata Marsh Interpretative Center Strategic Plan.
2. Reviewed the Beith Creek Road Decommissioning Plan for Sunny Brae Forest that was prepared by Pacific Watershed Associates.
3. The Committee provided informal guidance on the following restoration enhancement projects:
 - McDaniel Slough
 - Baylands
 - Janes Creek Reed Canary Grass Control
 - Fickle Hill Creek Restoration
 - Jolly Giant Creek Restoration/Passage
 - Janes Creek Sediment Assessment

Development Projects

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

1. Humboldt State University Corporation Yard

D. General Comments

1. Committee reviewed and commented on Friends of the Arcata Marsh Humboldt's Dog Friendly Areas Brochure.
2. Members of the Committee participated in the Mad River Symposium which was held at Blue Lake Casino on July 29 and 30, 2011.

E. Future Tasks:

1. Investigate incentives and opportunities for the City and property owners to implement Low Impact Development (LID) retrofits and assist with outreach on LID. *(In progress)*
2. Complete the EPA Water Quality Score Card. *(In progress)*
3. Complete setback recommendations on creek side parcels. *(In progress)*
4. In conjunction with a California Department of Conservation Watershed Coordinator Grant, assist the City of Trinidad in conducting workshops and conferences related to water quality and watershed protection. *(In progress)*

5. Develop Bayview Ranch Management Plan.
6. Explore potential carbon credits for created wetlands, or expanding riparian buffers larger than required.
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. Assist with updates to the City website to highlight past and current creeks and wetlands restoration projects.
10. Conduct joint meetings with the Forest Management, Open Space and Agriculture, Parks and Recreation Committees.
11. Provide City with short public service announcements to be aired on public access television during City Council or Planning Commission breaks.

F. Recommendations

1. Work with Community Development Department to incorporate changes suggested by the Wetlands and Creeks Committee for wetlands and creeks related sections of the *Land Use Code*.