



CITY OF ARCATA WETLANDS AND CREEKS COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL 2012

Presented at the April 3, 2013 City Council Meeting

Committee Members:

Bob Brown, Chair

Vanessa Metz, Vice-Chair

Dan Gale

(Appointed in 2012)

Douglas Kelly

(Liaison, Forest Management Committee)

Todd Kraemer

(Resigned in 2012)

Chris McAuliffe

(Appointed in 2013)

Catherine McGourty

Jeremy Svehla

Ted Weller

(Resigned in 2012)

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 2012. The Committee's regularly scheduled study session with the City Council was held on November 1, 2012 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:

A. Creek and Wetlands/Policies/Ordinances/Management Plans

1. Provided input regarding the draft Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast (SONCC) Coho Recovery Plan.
2. Established a Low Impact Development (LID) Sub-Committee to help raise awareness of LID, assist with retrofits, and future City designs. Committee Members Brown, Svehla and Metz serve on the sub-committee.
3. Made recommendations on the Arcata Bay segment of Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District's Humboldt Bay Water Ways Trails Improvements.
4. Commented on the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's draft Waste Discharge Requirements and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination (NPDES) for Storm Water Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4).
5. Made Recommendations to Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation & Conservation District on pre-permitting future oyster growing areas. The Committee recommended that the City's tidelands be included as potential sites for the aquaculture expansion project.
6. Continued to review the 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. Established a sub-committee of Committee Members McAuliffe and Svehla to review, comment and complete review of the glossary and provide modifications to staff.

B. Management of City-owned Creeks and Wetlands

1. Developed Quality of Life Indicators regarding Wetlands, Creeks, stormwater and Low Impact Development.
2. Provided initial input on the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Strategic Plan.
3. Reviewed a proposal from Michael Monet Walker for a sculpture labyrinth on Mt. Trashmore at the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. The Committee reviewed the written proposal and made the following recommendations: A. The cap for the old landfill cannot be broken so the labyrinth may not be able to be constructed at that site; B. There were concerns regarding its impact on the habitat; C. It was not appropriate for the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary as one of its primary purposes is to serve as a wildlife sanctuary.
4. Made recommendations regarding the memorial bench policy.
5. The Committee provided informal guidance on the following restoration enhancement projects:
 - McDaniel Slough
 - Baylands South Jacoby Estuary Project
 - Janes Creek Reed Canary Grass Control Project
 - Fickle Hill Creek Restoration
 - South Fork Janes Creek Sediment Assessment
 - Arcata Elementary School Sunset Creek Project
 - California Conservation Corps Proposition 84 Creeks Grant
 - Proposition 84 Parking Lot LID Retrofits Grant
6. Conducted field tours to Baylands and Janes Creek Meadows.

C. Development Projects

No development projects came before the Committee in 2012.

D. Public Outreach

1. Provided short public service announcements on stormwater management to Surfrider to show at its events. These have also been, and will continue to be, aired on public access television during City Council or Planning Commission breaks.
2. In conjunction with a California Department of Conservation Watershed Coordinator Grant, assisted the Cities of Trinidad and Eureka in organizing the Low Impact Development workshop that was held on January 23, 2013, over 100 people attended.

3. In conjunction with a California Department of Conservation Watershed Coordinator Grant, assisted the Cities of Trinidad and Eureka in revising and printing the stormwater brochure, *Humboldt Bay Starts At Your Street* and the brochure and poster on responsible dog ownership.

E. Ongoing 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.
2. Complete the EPA Water Quality Score Card.
3. Complete setback recommendations on creek side parcels.
4. In conjunction with a California Department of Conservation Watershed Coordinator Grant, assist the Cities of Trinidad and Eureka in conducting workshops, conferences and educational material related to water quality and watershed protection.
5. Assist with the Stormwater Management Program and Master Plan Implementation, MS4, in accordance with new MS4 guidelines.
6. Assist with updates to the City website to highlight past and current creeks and wetlands restoration projects.
7. 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.

F. Future Tasks

1. Assist with developing the Bayview Ranch Management Plan.
2. Explore potential carbon credits for created wetlands, or expanding riparian buffers larger than required.
3. Develop recommendations on recreational use in and adjacent to sensitive habitats.
4. Conduct joint meetings with the Forest Management, Open Space and Agriculture, Parks and Recreation Committees.
5. Assist with planning McDaniel Slough breach – set date for either September or October.