Advisory Council Members

Present: at this meeting in **BOLD PRINT**

Gina Moran – California State Parks – District Superintendent
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Chris Peregrin – TRNERR – Reserve Manager
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Andy Yuen – SDNWRC – Project Leader
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Brian Collins – USFWS – Refuge Manager
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Mike McCoy – SWIA – President
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Anna Shepherd – US Naval Base Coronado – Community Plans and Liaison Officer
   619-545-4134, anna.shepherd@navy.mil

Chris Helmer – City of Imperial Beach – Environmental and Natural Resources Director
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Brianna Menke – City of San Diego – Transportation & Storm Water Division
   858-541-4314, bmenke@sandiego.gov

Doug Liden – USEPA – Environmental Engineer
   619-235-4763, liden.douglas@epa.gov

Amber Craig – USBP – Public Lands Liaison Agent
   619-942-1480, amber.l.craig@cbp.dhs.gov

Dawi Dakhil – USIBWC – Project Manager
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Mike Verderber – SD County Parks – Supervising Park Ranger
   619-428-2946, mike.verderber@sdcounty.ca.gov

Sam Jenniches – State Coastal Conservancy – Project Manager
   760-832-7365, sjenniches@scc.ca.gov

Michelle Jesperson – California Coastal Commission representative
   619-767-2380, mjesperson@coastal.ca.gov
Program Managers Present:

Lorena Warner-Lara – Assistant Reserve Manager (Stewardship) – TRNERR
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Ana Eguiarte – Coastal Training Program Binational Liaison – TRNERR
   619-575-3615 ext. 314, kgoodrich@trnerr.org
Jeff Crooks – Research Coordinator – TRNERR
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Anne Marie Tipton – Education Coordinator – TRNERR
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Members of the Public

Mitch McKay, C4CC
David Waller, Resident
Vivian Marquez-Waller, Resident
John Fanestil, Friends of Friendship Park
Josh Bugiel, County Parks
Robin Echols-Booth, TRNERR

Wade McKnight, Friends of Friendship Park
Karla Langham, Rep. Juan Vargas
Marty Graham, Public
Emma Reese, TRVEA, Resident
Cassidy Walker, TRNERR

A. 1:03 Meeting was called to order

B. AGENDA – Cruz Ponce, CalOES component was removed from the agenda and will hopefully be moved to a later meeting. The remaining draft agenda was approved.

C. LAST MEETING MINUTES - Meeting minutes, were not adopted. Everyone was given until February 11, 2020 to review and make comments.

D. Member Comments

Anna Shepherd – US Naval Base Coronado – Community Plans and Liaison Officer
   i. The Navy has a new Environmental Director, Sarah Coppel, as well as a new Planning and Conservation Branch Head, Joyce Sisson, replacing Tiffany Shepherd. Sisson will be attending future meetings.
   ii. This week the Navy is having the Coronado Annual Beach Cleanup. Trash is picked up on Navy property at the beach and bay side of the Silver Strand and on the beaches at North Island. The cleanup removes tons of trash each year to prepare and clean the beaches for the upcoming Snowy Plover and Least Tern nesting season.
iii. Staff changes and change in leadership in March, the current commanding officer Captain Flynn of Naval base Coronado will be relieved by Captain John DePree and the incoming executive officer is Captain Dwight Clemons.

iv. One REPI Challenge preproposal was received that was associated with Naval Base Coronado in Campo. The REPI Program can support natural resources management outside of DOD property to complement the Navy’s natural resources management.

Mike Verderber – SD County Parks Supervising Ranger
i. The County is focusing on assessing the trails to see the condition and accessibility of the trails due to all of the recent rains and flooding and then evaluating the type of work that needs to be performed to repair any damage and or overgrowth of vegetation.

Chris Helmer – City of Imperial Beach
i. The Imperial Beach Boulevard Enhancement Project continues; all major construction is projected to be finished by May 1, 2020.

ii. Construction delays on Imperial Beach Blvd. will be ongoing. The road is closed east of 9th Street. For more information check our social media or contact the City.

iii. One issue related to Matadero Canyon is the ongoing flows from Pump Station One in Tijuana coming across the main channel. The Thanksgiving storm knocked out the main sewer pump station in Tijuana and it has been down since. Getting mixed messages from CESPT that they are not planning on having it fixed until sometime in the summer or later.

Doug Liden clarified that the transfer of operations from CILA to CESPT won’t happen until end of the summer.

iv. The Prop 68 Urban Flood Protection grant program might be a good fit with the Border Field road project.

Mike McCoy – SWIA – President
i. The administrative director of SWIA, Deb Carey retired at the end of December. Deb’s scope of work was very broad and included work on the NOAA ops grant. She worked with many agencies including but not limited to the EPA, NOAA, US Fish and Wildlife Service, California State Parks, The Wildlife Conservancy, and The Coastal Conservancy. Her position is being filled with Cristina Cross-Bingham.

Andy Yuen – USFWS – Project Leader
i. There are currently three unfilled positions in the San Diego Refuge complex. They recently lost the Assistant Refuge Manager, a maintenance worker and a law enforcement officer. At the San Diego Refuges, Tijuana Slough we are down to a few employees including Brian Collins, Debby Good and a reduced law enforcement staff. So far there is not a budget to accommodate the filling of those positions.

Gina Moran – California State Parks – District Superintendent
i. The Governor’s proposed budget for next fiscal year has a lot of funding for access and acquisition for State Parks.
ii. State Parks is working on a strategic operations plan which is a five-year continuation of the Parks Forward movement and the Transformation movement.

iii. The new non-profit partner to California State Parks, “Parks California” will be holding their September board meeting here at the Tijuana Estuary. They leverage public, private and non-profit funding to protect and ensure that State Park Lands and other lands will remain resilient while meeting the lifelong needs of Californians.

Sam Jenniches – State Coastal Conservancy
   i. Update: Regarding the fund of $15 million from Prop. 68 for cross border sewage and pollution issues. The Conservancy has not yet heard from any grantees. Interested parties should look at the grants tab on their website to find the email for Program Director, Megan Cooper.
   ii. The Explore the Coast grant RFP is now available. The program provides access to Californians to the coast. Contact Sam Jenniches or Megan Cooper.
   iii. The Conservancy is continuing work on the Nelson Sloan Quarry, TETRP II and is also working on the County’s campground project.

Dawi Dakhil – USIBWC – Interim Area Operations Manager
   i. The IBWC continues to treat all raw sewage flows from Mexico. All canyon collectors are fully functional, all flows are being diverted and treated.
   ii. This includes Smuggler’s Gulch/Matadero canyon collector; all flows are being treated at the treatment plant. Water levels in Matadero have been lowered substantially, almost 30 feet. The Matadero pump station is operational now.
   iii. The Tijuana River CILA pump station continues to be offline mostly due to rain events. Which is why there is continued flow in the river.
   iv. PB1a and PB1b – Mexico’s CESPT has restored 3 sets of pumps and they are now operational.

Michelle Jesperson – California Coastal Commission representative
   i. The Commission’s draft 5-year Strategic Plan is out for public review. Comment deadline: February 14, 2020.

Brianna Menke – City of San Diego – Transportation & Storm Water Division
   i. Update on Hydrology and hydraulics study Phase 2 (in partnership with Army Corps of Engineers). It is on track for completion September 2020. They are meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers next month to discuss the modeling of sediment basin locations.

Doug Liden – USEPA – Environmental Engineer
   i. The EPA has completed the Poniente 1B Collector project about 4,500 meters of pipe installed. About $1.16 million from EPA. Then there’s the Poniente 1A project which is about 50% complete, it’s about a 1,800 m project. Both projects will help reduce amount of raw sewage getting into the river.
ii. Still waiting on Congress to give guidance on where and how the $300 million dollars can be spent (from the USMCA). Current restrictions do not allow the money to fund another federal agency and it’s supposed to come to the EPA in chunks of $75 million.

E. Program Manager Reports

Chris Peregrin – Reserve Manager Report – TRNERR
i. TRNERR staff attended the NERRS annual meeting in Charleston. That city is facing big flooding issues. Perhaps opportunity for City of IB to connect with them on these similarities.

ii. Continuing work on Nelson Sloan Quarry Project with Coastal Conservancy and consultant Dudek on final design and environmental review.

iii. Working on TETRP II Phase I - 80 acres of salt marsh restoration planned for Border Field State Park and Tijuana Slough National Wildlife Refuge.

iv. A new research project this year, funded through the Ocean Protection Council, is exploring low intensity methods for restoring and growing sand dunes.

v. Regarding the Border Impact Bond, the local non-profit, 4Walls in partnership with the Ocean Conservancy and other entities is looking at solutions in Mexico and procuring funding to resolve the issues at the source. This is a social impact bond using funds from private investors in infrastructure in Mexico. Downstream benefits are evaluated and the financial savings that is realized by the State of California or the US Federal Government is used to reimburse private investors. More monitoring programs are needed to measure these downstream benefits, such as the current one being done by the University of California, Irvine to develop methods of monitoring trash flowing into the river valley across the border.

vi. Update on pollution and solid waste:
   The Ocean Protection Council works to address the issues of marine debris in the form of litter and microplastics. Chris is working on creating a connection with them not just because of our significant solid waste and plastics issues but also as part of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System.
   Another important connection for the Tijuana River NERR is the California EPA, Chris is reaching out to them on the cross-border pollution issues.

vii. California State Parks manages most of the small coastal wetlands in California and has launched an Estuaries Initiative. It is being led by the Natural Resources Division in Sacramento with an objective of pushing forward research monitoring and protection in estuaries.

Marty Graham – member of public
Q: Is State Parks looking at managed retreat locally or statewide?
A: Chris Peregrin - He needs to investigate this more, but there’s probably some statewide direction that is coming down but also District by District.
A: Gina Moran - it would be in our climate plan, however she doesn’t think the state has gotten to the point of adaptation (through) managed retreat.
Andy Yuen – Refuge Manager Report – USFWS
i. Results from the Rail count shows the light-footed Ridgeway’s rail numbers were significantly lower in 2019 by 50% compared to 2018. This is probably due to anoxic conditions created by the river mouth closing.
ii. They are finalizing the interpretive panels at the overview area on Seacoast Drive. The deck at 3rd and Imperial Beach Blvd. will also be replaced.
iii. For more information refer to Program Manager Report by Brian Collins

Anne Marie Tipton – Education Report – TRNERR
i. The 50th anniversary for Border Field State Park is coming up in 2021. In partnership with Parks California we will soon be planning some events to celebrate.
ii. Update on PORTS Program: the Reserve just provided its first online learning program to a school in Pennsylvania. The program was “Detecting a Changing Climate in the Tijuana Estuary.” Students can see data and a presentation in real time. There are more of these programs scheduled early this year.
iii. Special Events. World Migratory Bird Day event is on March 14th and will be held at the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge at 12th & 13th streets in Imperial Beach. This is in partnership with the National Wildlife Refuge. The education program participated in Love Your Wetlands Day at Kendall Frost.
iv. Defer to Program Manager Report.

i. Update from John Boland’s November surveys looking at impacts of Kuroshio shot-hole borer beetle (KSHB). The KSHB is still present in the valley, though much rarer. It has moved into the Dry Forests and is still doing damage to willow trees. The Wet Forests that were damaged early in the 2016 infestation (e.g., around Hollister and Dairy Mart) have recovered quickly and are now almost as big as they were before they were attacked. The recovering forest trees are NOT being re-attacked by the KSHB, which is really surprising and perplexing. The recovering forests now include extensive areas of arundo, particularly just west of Dairy Mart Bridge; arundo (not KSHB) is the biggest problem facing managers today. A report will be out in April.
ii. Nelson Sloan Quarry Restoration update: EIR is moving forward with Public Review Draft EIR anticipated late spring 2020. Traffic Impact Analysis is underway, and revisions continue on 65% design revisions. Dudek will start adult Quino checkerspot butterfly surveys this week and may be in the field every week for up to 12 weeks. These additional surveys will be a part of the BioTechnical Report of the EIR and are a result of last year’s discovery of endangered Quino during the biological surveys for the project.
iii. Defer to Program Manager Report.

Ana Eguiarte – Coastal Training Program Report – TRNERR
i. Green Infrastructure for Coastal Resilience Workshop will be held in Ensenada on February 19 & 20. Speakers includes representatives from NOAA, COLEF (university), UABC (university), and Coastal Solutions. Day two will include a visit to Estero Punta
Banda to look at dune rehabilitation. Registration is currently closed at 80 participants. First step toward a state level regulation about green infrastructure with the State Water Commission (Comisión Estatal de Agua), not CESPT more research state agency.

ii. March 25 & 26 will be the Binational Management of Solid Waste workshop (funded by NOAA’s Marine Debris Program and in partnership with the City of Tijuana and other stakeholders), it is the second event; the previous was in 2018. First day will be presentations and working tables at Tijuana’s UABC and followed by site visits the next day. Save-the-date and draft agenda will be sent soon.

iii. In the process of signing an MOU for single-use plastics between the municipality of Tecate and SWIA.

iv. Another workshop this Thursday with the State Water Commission in Tecate. They want to work on watershed issues; these are new government representatives who want to identify potential projects to work on together with the Reserve.

v. Defer to Program Manager Report.

Jeff Crooks – Research Report – TRNERR

i. https://tijuanariver.trnerr.org/ for live data from telemetered water quality station and IBWC river gauge. Informative to look at, need more research on what/how much can be inferred about cross-border river flow by looking at our salinity data.

ii. We are trying to get as much fieldwork done here and at the Peñasquitos Lagoon and the San Diego Bay before nesting season starts.

iii. Update on TETRP II Phase I: is at the final design, engineering, and permitting stage with AECOM as consultant. The idea is not just to restore habitat but also the function and resilience of the system.

iv. Discussion ensued.

F. **New Business**

a. Matadero Canyon Flooding (Smuggler’s Gulch)
   

   - 8-foot diameter pipe was blocked with unknown objects on or around December 26. Mexico was unable to remove the blockage.

   - Approximately **27-feet of water** accumulated on the south side of the Tijuana highway due to the blocked pipe.

   - Currently Mexico has removed and continues to remove trash and debris from ponded water area.

   - Mexico is pumping water into the drainage pipe, sending it to the Smugglers canyon collector.

b. Border Field State Park Trail Closure
   
   i. Chris Peregrin, TRNERR, led a discussion on the recent Park closure.
- Highlighted pictures of flow from Goat Canyon across Monument Road (North/South) and down the beach horse trail, can be found here: [https://trnerr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BFSP_trails_closure_02.05.20.pdf](https://trnerr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BFSP_trails_closure_02.05.20.pdf)

G. **General Public Comment:**

Vivian Marquez-Waller, member of public  
Q: She smelled the worst smell on Seacoast Dr than she has in years. If it’s not Matadero, could it be due to pumps 1A & 1B being offline?  
A: Dawi Dakhil – Not sure as Mexico didn’t report any problems with infrastructure. River flow has been consistent, the last rain event was beyond capacity of CILA pump station. No, the pumps stations 1A & 1B are operating. Three sets of pumps working. 500 l/s (10 mgd) of flow each.

Marty Graham, member of public  
C: Responding to above comment. Is it possible that sewage smell is from Punta Bandera?  
A: Dawi Dakhil – not sure.  
A: Chris Helmer - IB lifeguards drove down to the border. They think that likely because water levels are down in Matadero, there is a field of sludge that could be emitting the odor.

Oscar Romo – member of public  
C: Trash booms were deployed in Smuggler’s Gulch on County land. They are made from plastic trash from Tijuana that has been melted down and repurposed. Trash booms will be removed temporarily in May and reinstalled in September after a cleanup.

H. **Future Agenda Considerations**

None were given. Please email Lorena Warner-Lara, lorena.warner-lara@parks.ca.gov, with any future agenda items.

I. **Adjourned at 3:05pm**

**TRNERR MEETINGS FOR Advisory Council – TRNERR Training Center @1pm**

Future TRNERR Advisory Council dates:
- May 5, 2020  
- August 4, 2020  
- November 3, 2020