

**TIJUANA RIVER NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Tuesday, November 2, at 1pm
301 Caspian Way, Imperial Beach CA, 91932
Meeting held virtually via *Zoom* platform

***ADOPTED* meeting minutes**

Advisory Council Members

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

Gina Moran – California State Parks – District Superintendent
619-688-3356, gina.moran@parks.ca.gov

Chris Peregrin – TRNERR – Reserve Manager
619-575-3615 ext. 303, chris.peregrin@parks.ca.gov

Andy Yuen – USFWS – SDNWRC Project Leader
619-476-9150, andy_yuen@fws.gov

Brian Collins – USFWS – Refuge Manager
619-575-3613 ext. 302, brian_collins@fws.gov

Gary Brown for Mike McCoy – SWIA – Board Member
619-423-0495, mccoy4ib@aol.com

Anna Shepherd – US Naval Base Coronado – Community Plans and Liaison Officer
619-545-4134, anna.shepherd@navy.mil

Joyce Sisson – US Naval Base Coronado – Planning and Conservation Branch Head
619-545-4134, joyce.sisson@navy.mil

Chris Helmer – City of Imperial Beach – Environmental and Natural Resources Director
619-628-1370, chelmer@imperialbeachca.gov

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
619-942-1780, amber.l.craig@cbp.dhs.gov

Morgan Rogers – USIBWC – Area Operations Manager
619-417-4613, morgan.rogers@ibwc.gov

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

Toni Ross – California Coastal Commission – Coastal Program Analyst
619-767-2370, Toni.Ross@coastal.ca.gov

Melis Okter – NOAA's Office for Coastal Management – NERR Liaison
510-637-3841, melis.okter@noaa.gov

Program Managers Present:

Lorena Warner-Lara – TRNERR – Assistant Reserve Manager (Stewardship)

619-575-3615 ext. 312, lorena.warner-lara@parks.ca.gov

Kristen Goodrich – TRNERR – Coastal Training Program Coordinator

619-575-3615 ext. 314, kgoodrich@trnerr.org

Jeff Crooks – TRNERR – Research Coordinator

619-575-3615 ext. 333, jcrooks@trnerr.org

Anne Marie Tipton – TRNERR – Education Coordinator

619-575-3615 ext. 304, annemarie.tipton@parks.ca.gov

Members of the Public

Andrew Funk, City of San Diego

Julie Collins-Dogrul, Public

Dan Watman, Friends of Friendship Park

Marya Ahmad, TRNERR

Trisha Mejia, SD Surfrider

Kiran Kaur, County of San Diego (Parks)

Viviane Marquez-Waller, Resident

Emma Reese, TRVEA/Resident

1. 1:06 Meeting was called to order

2. **AGENDA** – Agenda was adopted.

3. **LAST MEETING MINUTES** – meeting minutes were adopted with one correction – Anna Shepherd – US Naval Base Coronado noted that the new Captain’s name is Captain Dwight Clemons.

4. Member Comments

Andy Yuen – USFWS – SDNWRC Project Leader

- a. Please refer to Brian Collins Refuge Report (see below).

Sam Jenniches – State Coastal Conservancy – Project Manager

- a. The following grant programs are currently active, please refer to the website links for additional information:
 - i. Coastal Stories Grant Program to support inclusive storytelling about the California Coast: <https://scc.ca.gov/2021/10/26/coastal-stories-grant-program-launched-to-support-inclusive-storytelling-about-the-california-coast/>
 - ii. Coastal Resilience Grant: <https://scc.ca.gov/2021/10/05/coastal-conservancy-allocated-500m-for-coastal-resilience/>
- b. The process to select a new Executive Officer for the Conservancy is underway, a selection meeting will be held on November 3rd:
<https://scc.ca.gov/2021/10/20/coastal-conservancy-special-board-meeting-november-03-2021/>

Anna Shepherd – US Naval Base Coronado – Community Plans and Liaison Officer

- a. There was a change of command at the Naval Base Coronado. Captain DuPree has been relieved of duty by the new commanding officer, Captain Dwight Clemons.

Joyce Sisson – US Naval Base Coronado – Planning and Conservation Branch Head

- a. The Navy is working with the Fish and Wildlife Service and SWIA on a restoration and invasive control plan in the area, including areas affected by the shot hole borer beetle. The USGS is assisting in evaluating how the damage caused by the beetle in the riparian areas has impacted the least Bell's vireo and other migratory birds. There is also a project to remove cowbirds.

Chris Helmer – City of Imperial Beach – Environmental and Natural Resources Director

- a. The City of Imperial Beach is still implementing its Tijuana River Valley sediment management plan and monitoring program. It is in the middle of that project right now. There will be a project presentation at the upcoming IBWC Citizens' Forum on this upcoming Thursday.
- b. The City is starting to launch some Parks and Recreation programs and is looking at opportunities to partner with the Reserve. American Recovery Act Funds will be approved for Parks and Recreation Programs to improve its facilities and programs.
- c. The City is developing plans to repurpose 1.2 miles of the Bayshore Bikeway corridor. The project will enhance flood protection of the bikeway and the adjacent neighborhood as well as improve access to the bikeway while also providing opportunities for future development and recreation.
Project website: <https://www.ibbayshorebikeway.com/>
Project Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxc1qlqQbvQ>
- d. To enhance its funding for needed projects, the City of Imperial Beach has applied for a BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructures and Communities) grant sponsored by FEMA.

Brianna Menke – City of San Diego – Transportation & Storm Water Division

- a. Update: regarding the Tijuana River Valley Watershed Phase 2 Hydrologic and Hydraulic Study, the City of San Diego is still waiting to send out the revised final version. The Army Corps knows there are still some outstanding questions.

Kiran Kaur – SD County Parks – Land Use/Environmental Planner

- a. Update: The County is still working on the Smuggler's Gulch Project; the alternatives analysis should be ready for a public meeting in the next few months.
- b. Another project, the Tijuana River Valley Habitat Restoration Plan, will also be ready to share its progress in a few months.

Morgan Rogers – USIBWC – Area Operations Manager

- a. Dr. Maria-Elena Giner was sworn in on September 15, as the new IBWC Commissioner. She has over 25 years of experience working along the US-Mexican border.

- b. The Citizen's Forum meeting is this upcoming Thursday at 5:30 until 7:30pm. There will be three presentations.
 - i. An update on the upgrades of the PBCILA.
 - ii. Doug Liden, EPA, will give an update of the USMCA project.
 - iii. The City of Imperial Beach's contractor Bryn Evans with Dudek will give an update on the Tijuana River Valley Sediment Management work plan and Monitoring Program Project.

Amber Craig – USBP – Public Lands Liaison Agent

- a. Update: There is coastal activity, people are either swimming around the border fence or using jet skis or pangas and are landing near the river mouth, especially during fog. People that are keeping the agents busy elsewhere, are from Brazil, Venezuela and African Countries, and a lot of family groups. The Tijuana River Valley Border Patrol agents are being kept very busy due to increased activity.

Gary Brown – SWIA – Board Member

- a. Mayda Winter has been involved in talks with the Fish and Wildlife Service regarding invasive species treatment, dune restoration and, in the planning process of website re-design by the end of the year, (funding provided by the County of San Diego).

5. Program Manager Reports

Brian Collins – USFWS – Refuge Manager

- a. The oil spill out of Huntington Beach has resulted in tar balls on the beaches at the Tijuana Estuary, and some have been seen in the back lagoon area. . California State Parks and the US Coast Guard have been surveying and responding to the ongoing situation. Damage to the natural resources is being assessed and the information gathered will inform any actions taken to seek compensation from those responsible for the oil spill.
- b. The Tijuana Estuary is finally welcoming back volunteers and will be working with the San Diego Audubon on a 2-acre restoration near the corner of 3rd and Imperial Beach Blvd.
- c. The Refuge is working with the Friends of the San Diego Wildlife Refuges on interpretive sign concepts at the corner of 5th and Iris Ave. They are also working on ideas for an interpretive element, either signs or a kiosk at 5th St. and Grove St.
- d. The California Conservation Corps will soon begin work on projects in the area, starting in South San Diego Bay. There they will be removing and repairing damage to the habitat caused by an illegal trail that was made, which starts at 7th Street and continues to the Coronado Cays. The Port is handling the impacts of this trail to the north of the Refuge.
- e. Update: The Otay River Estuary Restoration Project, funded by Poseidon Resources, needs flood plain mapping revision and as a result will probably not break ground until the fall of 2022.

- f. The Refuge is doing remediation on the D Street Fill Restoration Project site. This work is needed to address the problem of hyper salinity in the upland habitats at the location.

Chris Peregrin – TRNERR – All Program Reports

Reserve Manager Report

- a. CA State Parks staff is busy responding to the oil spill that occurred in Orange County early October. Reminder about tar balls, do not touch it, report it.
Tarballreports@wildlife.ca.gov.
- b. C. Peregrin has been attending a six-month seminar series “Leaders in Outdoor Equity.” It is offered by Outdoor Outreach, The Nonprofit Institute at the University of San Diego, and the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The series focuses on historical and contemporary issues of exclusion and inequity as they relate to our public lands and highlights current efforts to address these issues. Modules are recorded and can be viewed here:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL3-yKM10rylyb8EtA4aiLlohOkA7JfWE>
As part of this effort C. Peregrin is part of a cohort of individuals that are looking at this material in greater depth and applying the concepts, tools, and resources to a specific project. C. Peregrin is focusing on limited camping opportunities in San Diego coast and specifically at Silver Strand State Beach.

Education Report

- a. The Reserve will launch a podcast and a digital Story App to be used by visitors when they visit Border Field State Park. Four episodes of Divided Together, supported by CA State Parks Foundation, Parks California, and an anonymous donor, are available on our website <https://trnerr.org/divided-together/> and wherever you get your podcasts. Consider having a Listening Party in these dark evenings after the time changes.
 - Divided Together Ep 1: Kumeyaay Nation Divided by the Border
 - Divided Together Ep 2: Scientists and Geographers Working Across Borders
 - Divided Together Ep 3: Indigenous Land Use Practices
 - Divided Together Ep 4: Human Rights Along the Border
- b. All docent-led walks have returned. Bird Walks on 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday at 10am and Nature Walks on 2nd and 4th Saturday at 11am.
- c. In-person school programs are resuming next month.
- d. Blended Teachers on the Estuary (TOTE), aka teacher training, is happening this week and November 9th.
- e. The Reserve has plenty of openings with our elementary, middle, and high school PORTS (Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students) distance learning programs for next year. Programs are mostly booked through the end of this calendar year.

Coastal Training Program Report

- a. This fall, after a highly competitive review process, the NOAA Marine Debris Program announced that TRNERR was one of ten recipients of the 2021 North America Marine Debris Prevention and Removal award. Funding provided by the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) Implementation Act will support projects that prevent or reduce the occurrence of marine debris, and projects that remove marine debris from the environment. CTP, along with other Reserve programs, will lead the development of binational emergency guidance, circular economy approaches for upcycling waste in Tijuana, and a developing a leadership academy on the topic.
- b. This October, a year of virtual training opportunities on coastal issues culminated in a capstone event that discussed opportunities for improving coordination in coastal sediment management. CTP hosted *The Changing Sediment Landscape & Future of California's Shores and Beaches* series in partnership with the California Shore and Beach Preservation Association and recordings can be accessed at <https://asbpa.org/2021/04/20/csbpa-2021-webinar-series/>.

Stewardship Report

- a. Goat Canyon update: The contractor ERG has excavated 20,000 cy from the sediment basins.
- b. The Nelson Sloan Quarry Restoration and Beneficial Reuse of Sediment Project update: after 18 months of work on the project, the Draft EIR is out for 45-day public review. The comment period ends November 4th. All related documents and details to comment on are available at <https://trnerr.org/about/public-notices/>.
E-mail: SDCD.CEQA(at)parks.ca.gov
U.S. Mail:
Lorena Warner-Lara
CA State Parks, TRNERR
301 Caspian Way
Imperial Beach, CA 91932
- c. Tijuana Estuary Tidal Restoration Program II Phase I EIR/EIS. Making way on the Draft EIR/EIS per CEQA and NEPA. Dr. Crooks will be presenting details on the project. We expect the Draft EIR/EIS (to include public review period) to be out prior to the next Advisory Council meeting. Details on that project can be found at: <https://trnerr.org/about/public-notices/>
- d. TRAM update: The twelfth annual Tijuana River Action Month ran from September 18 through October 16 with a series of hybrid events. There were 19 events (including in-person clean-ups, Lunchtime Live, in-person and virtual workshops, and an art contest). For the Reserve, this was the first opportunity since Covid started to have a

group volunteer event for Coastal Cleanup Day. Unfortunately, because of the thunderstorm, we had to cancel the other in-person group event for the last day of TRAM. Normally we would have been able to offer a backup site in case of rain but not this year.

Research Report

- a. The Research program is back to intense field work after the breeding season. We are focusing on vegetation monitoring and re-visiting long-term transects. Some of these have been sampled annually since the late 1980s. We are also looking at broader changes in riparian and marsh habitat, particularly related to effects of the invasive shot hole borer (with funding from the Navy, which Joyce mentioned).
- b. The Research program is holding off on most fish and invertebrate monitoring but are continuing with minnow trapping in the Tijuana Estuary, south San Diego Bay, and Los Peñasquitos Lagoon.
- c. The Research program is working with the USGS project team to refine marsh response modelling to sea level rise, particularly related to TETRP.
- d. Field trips are ramping up again, and Dr. Crooks is hosting several university class visits this fall.

6. New Business

- a. Dr. Jeff Crooks (TRNERR/SWIA) gave a presentation on the Tijuana Estuary Tidal Restoration Program (TETRP) II Phase I project in preparation of upcoming Draft EIR/EIS public review.
- b. A video excerpt was provided by Wetland Ecologist Chris Nordby; the video was originally from the TETRP II Phase I public meeting (minutes 24:02 to 38:36). Video link: <https://trnerr.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/6pm-Recording-of-Meeting-with-Closed-Captions.mp4>
- c. Dr. Crooks provided a supplemental presentation; link: <https://trnerr.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/TRNERR-AC-TETRP-2Nov21-v2.pdf>

7. General Public Comment:

Q: Gary Brown: Does the draft EIS/EIR prefer one of the two alternatives?

A: Jeff Crooks: There has been discussion, but Jeff is not sure.

Q: Dan Watman: Does TETRP affect flooding of the area?

A: Jeff Crooks: The project is designed to not increase flooding and should, prevent flooding. Details outlining this is in the EIR/EIS.

Q: Dan Watman: Is there truth to the rumor that there is an event at Border Field on the upcoming Thursday.

A: Chris Peregrin: Has not heard anything. He will follow up.

A: Agent Craig: Has not heard anything.

Q. Vivian: Would Mr. Rogers be willing to elaborate about what is going on at Stewart's Drain?

A. Mr. Rogers: Most of the transboundary flows come from Stewart's Drain, which is directly across the Border from the Mexican pump station PB1. When there are issues at PB1 and, it is not taking flow, that flow backs up into the international collector, which fills up and, the overflow comes out of holes in the top and flows into Stewart's Drain. It is an infrastructure issue of a leaking pipe that is under the road. To excavate would be difficult, and we are looking into the possibility of installing an inner liner.

8. 2022 Meeting Dates and Future Agenda Considerations

It was agreed to change the February 2022 meeting from the 1st to the 8th. The 2022 schedule is as stated below in item #10. Members will be sent new calendar appointments.

No future agenda items were given. Please email Chris Peregrin and Lorena Warner-Lara with any future agenda items (see emails at top of minutes).

9. Adjourned at 2:29pm

The meeting was adjourned.

10. TRNERR MEETINGS for Advisory Council – Virtually @1pm

Future TRNERR Advisory Council dates:

- Tuesday, February 8, 2022 *
- Tuesday, May 3, 2022
- Tuesday, August 2, 2022
- Tuesday, November 1, 2022

*Note this is not the 1st Tuesday of the month