

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

Tuesday, August 8, 2023, at 1pm
301 Caspian Way, Imperial Beach CA, 91932
Meeting held in-person and virtually via the *Zoom* platform.
ADOPTED meeting minutes

Advisory Council Members

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

Nicole Van Doren – California State Parks – Acting District Superintendent II
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Lisa Tomas – California State Parks – District Superintendent I
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Andy Yuen – USFWS – SDNWRC Project Leader
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Jill Terp – USFWS – Acting 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
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Loni Beyer Wilson – US Naval Base Coronado – Natural Resources Manager
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Chris Helmer – City of Imperial Beach – Environmental and Natural Resources Director
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Andrew Funk – City of San Diego – Stormwater Department
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Doug Liden – USEPA – Environmental Engineer
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Sean Ford – USBP – Border Patrol, Public Lands Liaison
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Larry Borden – USBP – Border Patrol, Special Operations Supervisor
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Morgan Rogers – USIBWC – Area Operations Manager
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Charles Gailband – SD County Parks – Region Manager
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Mike Verderber – SD County Parks – Supervising Park Ranger
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Sam Jenniches – State Coastal Conservancy – Project Manager
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Ashley Reineman – California Coastal Commission – Federal Programs Manager
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Toni Ross – California Coastal Commission – Coastal Program Analyst
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Melis Okter – NOAA's Office for Coastal Management – NERR Liaison
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Program Managers Present:

Chris Peregrin – TRNERR – Reserve Manager

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

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Kristen Goodrich – TRNERR – Coastal Training Program Coordinator

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

Jeff Crooks – TRNERR – Research Coordinator

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Anne Marie Tipton – TRNERR – Education Coordinator

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

Members of the Public

Lynn Reizer-Heftmann, TRVEA

Emma Reese, TRVEA

Demmuel Eslava, TRNERR

Viviane Marquez, Public

Christina Rayburn, TRNERR

David Waller, Public

1. **1:05 pm Meeting was called to order.**
2. **AGENDA** – adoption of August 8, 2023, agenda.
3. **LAST MEETING MINUTES** – Approval of May 2, 2023 minutes.
4. **Member Comments**

Lisa Tomas – California State Parks – District Superintendent I

- a. Newly joined as the District Superintendent I for the San Diego Coast District, very happy to be here and connect with the Reserve and provide her support.

Andy Yuen – USFWS – SDNWRC Project Leader

- a. Jill Terp, Deputy Project Leader is the acting Refuge Manager for the Tijuana Slough and San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuges.
- b. The Refuge Manager position remains open and is being re-advertised. The new fiscal year starts October. J.Terp is committed to being at TRNERR 1 day a week.

Sam Jenniches – State Coastal Conservancy – Project Manager

- a. Application submitted to NFWF for a coastal resilience grant of \$10 million for TETRP II Phase I implementation. Thanks to everyone that helped prepare the application.

- b. At the beginning stages of applying for a 75-million-dollar NOAA resilience challenge grant for Tijuana Estuary it is a combined application for the Tijuana Estuary and Ormond Beach Wetlands.
- c. The Conservancy in tandem with the Port of San Diego has submitted an expression of interest in the Sentinel Landscape designation for San Diego Bay and the Tijuana River Valley.

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

- a. Accepted a new position as the Community Planner & Liaison Officer for Navy Region Southwest, however in the new role will continue to work with all of you. Her position was posted on Friday August 4th, 2023.
- b. A. Shepherd and Eira Whitty with the County of San Diego are giving a presentation for the Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program Wednesday August 9th at 10am. Link to webinar in the chat: <https://www.repi.mil/Resources/Webinars.aspx>
- c. Naval Base Coronado was consulted on the NFWF application and provided positive feedback to the Department of Defense.
- d. The Navy had a round of public meetings at the end of June for their NEPA carrier analysis. The largest turnout was at the Coronado public meeting. The Navy will begin drafting the NEPA analysis and will hold another round of public meetings next summer on the draft.

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

- a. Monday, August 7th the City gave a tour of the Tijuana River Valley to the League of Women Voters.
- b. IB's beaches have been closed continuously for over 600 days and are not expected to be open at all this summer. The lack of access has caused many of the City's events to be canceled.
- c. The County and the City of San Diego, as well as the City of Imperial Beach, have issued a state of emergency, to get the State of California to recognize the emergency. C.Helmer will be going to the governor's office this week as part of that effort.

Andrew Funk – City of San Diego – Stormwater Department

- a. The City is still completing repairs from the berm failure caused by the rain season earlier this year that caused flooding in Smuggler's Gulch, coordinating with the City Public Utilities department.
- b. In summer (June, July, August) partnered with the County for a trash cleanup in the river valley, successfully removing 78,000 pounds or 40 tons of debris/trash.
- c. September 23, 2023, is the 39th annual Coastal Cleanup Day presented by I Love a Clean San Diego with over 100 clean up locations across the county with some in the Tijuana River Valley. Locations will be posted September 1st and the clean-up dates will be after the nesting season.

Mike Verderber – SD County Parks – Supervising Park Ranger

- a. The Tijuana River Valley Regional Park Campground continues to see great attendance due to summer months especially Yurt Village which sold out every weekend. The campground is 2 ½ years old, located at 1942 Monument Road.
- b. Thank you to the State and the TRNERR Education Coordinator and team for coordinating with the County on a successful Tijuana River Valley Regional Park's interpretation program which hosted 34 people at the campground. Discussions included the western snowy plover and the Tijuana Estuary with 2-3 more programs planned in the future.

Morgan Rogers – USBWC – Area Operations Manager

- a. The plant is receiving 27 million gallons per day, 7-day average. Nothing more to report.

6. Program Manager Reports

Andy Yuen – USFWS – SDNWRC Project Leader

- a. Robert Patton continues to do biological monitoring for terns and snowy plovers both north and south of the rivermouth. At the end of Seacoast Drive there is a greater population of salt marsh bird's-beak that have really blossomed this year.
- b. The deck at the end of Seacoast Drive needs to be replaced. Thank you to the City of IB for keeping it and the boardwalk clear of debris and open to the public. Refuges is looking into alternative locations for a deck in that location.
- c. Jill Terp is coming to the Refuge once a week and will continue working with the volunteers along with the TRNERR Volunteer Coordinator.

Chris Peregrin – TRNERR – Reserve Manager Report

- a. Defer to the [program manager report](#) that is produced every 6 months with a thorough written progress on the Tijuana Estuary. Every other quarter will have an online written report.

Anne Marie Tipton – TRNERR – Education Report

- a. TRNERR is doing programs once a month at the San Diego County Tijuana River Valley Regional Park campground this summer.
- b. TRNERR will be advertising for an Interpreter I soon, but currently she is working alone in Education.
- c. The Reserve's Education Program will be working on a plan for the Border Education Plaza at some point during this fiscal year.
- d. TRNERR Interpretive Master Plan has been approved by State Parks and is available for review.

Jeff Crooks – TRNERR – Research Report

- a. Refer to the [written program manager report](#). The Reserve's Research Program's primary activities now were gearing up for the fall sampling season - especially as it relates to pre-restoration monitoring for TETRP.

Lorena Warner-Lara – TRNERR – Stewardship Report (not present)

- a. Refer to [written program manager report](#).

Kristen Goodrich – TRNERR – Coastal Training Program Report

- a. TRNERR has launched the Marine Debris Leadership Academy Program (MDLA), started in July through NOAA Marine Debris funding. It is an eight-week course with 40 binational participants. Chris Helmer from City of Imperial Beach and Morgan Rogers with USIBWC are among the participants.
- b. MDLA is designed to explore challenges related to solid waste and marine debris, and what adaptive leadership looks like.
- c. Will consider doing presentation at a future advisory council meeting on some of the outcomes from MDLA.

6. **New Business**

Discussion on the Proposed Sentinel Landscape Designation, Anna Shepherd (U.S. Navy) with Sam Jenniches (State Coastal Conservancy)

Presentation overview link: https://trnerr.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SDSL_LeadershipBrief1page.pdf

- a. The Sentinel Landscape Program is a partnership between the Department of the Interior and the Department of Defense that is meant to leverage their mutual mission sets, such as to strengthen military readiness, conserve natural resources, meet the agricultural mission of the Department of the Interior, and to increase resilience and access to public recreation.

Preliminary boundaries for the designation would generally be from the San Diego Bay and the Tijuana River Valley.

The Coastal Conservancy and the Port of San Diego together with the Navy wrote up and submitted an expression of interest by the due date of July 27, 2023.

Leadership structure will need to be determined and the work program for the Landscape Coordinator will need to be defined. Meetings will be set up to establish the administration of the grant applications to prepare for the next three to five years. The maps that were submitted on July 27th with the proposal are in PowerPoint.

The draft boundary map includes the south bank of the San Diego River is the northern edge, the State's waterline is the western edge, watershed topography for eastern edge, and the US & Mexico border is the southern edge.

This first submission is an expression of interest and is the first draft and will be given to the team and if invited to submit a full proposal it will be revised and refined.

The goals of the Sentinel Landscape Program are advance sustainable land management, strengthen military readiness, preserve natural resources, support agricultural productivity, increase access to recreation, enhance resilience to climate change.

Question from public:

Can it have any effect on the sewage issue in the river valley?

A.Shepherd answer:

Water quality is their focus area, and the sewage is a water quality issue and they spoke to the EPA about trans-border pollution, and they were excited about this. It covers a wider area but does fall within the proposed sentinel landscape area.

C.Peregrin question:

How many Sentinel Landscapes have been designated?

A.Shepherd answer:

There is a total of twelve with only two on the west coast and most of them on the east coast.

C.Peregrin question:

Who established the Sentinel Landscape program?

A.Shepherd answer:

The program started in 2012 and was authorized by Congress at some time.

S.Jenniches elaborated:

There was an MOU between the three agencies and was put in the statute in 2018.

Question from public:

How likely is it to get the designation without agriculture involvement in the proposed boundaries?

S.Jenniches and A.Shepherd answer:

There is some agriculture in the boundaries, and it is not problematic that every goal is not met if many goals are met. They have reached out to the Resource Conservation District of San Diego County and let them know that the proposal was being put forward. The Bureau of Land Management is under the US Department of Agriculture, and they own a significant amount of land in the east county. If there was a designation of that went further east, it would further the fulfillment of that mission component.

8. Public Comment

Lynn Reizer-Heftmann, TRVEA

Question to A.Funk: What are the plans to dredge the Smuggler's Gulch drainage channel?
A.Funk will follow up with L.Reizer-Heftmann after the meeting and can provide an overview during the next meeting.

9. Future Agenda Considerations

Presentation on the Marine Debris Leadership Academy (MDLA) funded by NOAA Marine Debris Program. One of the components of the grant application was to develop an education cross border program. MDLA is an 8-week course, halfway into the program, and finishes at end of August.

Per Doug Liden at previous meeting - SDSU present on the research project they are doing at the International Treatment Facility

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

The following dates were adopted for the 2023 TRNERR Advisory Council meetings:

- Tuesday, November 7, 2023

11. Adjourned at 2:14PM

The meeting was adjourned.