

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

Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 1pm
301 Caspian Way, Imperial Beach CA, 91932
Meeting held virtually via the *Zoom* platform.

DRAFT meeting minutes

Advisory Council Members

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

Nicole Van Doren – California State Parks – Acting District Superintendent II
619-688-3356, nicole.vandoren@parks.ca.gov

Lisa Tomas – California State Parks – District Superintendent I
619-688-3230, lisa.tomas@parks.ca.gov

Andy Yuen – USFWS – SDNWRC Project Leader
(760) 535-7065, andy_yuen@fws.gov

Sally Brown – USFWS – Refuge Manager
(619) 964-1980, sally_brown@fws.gov

Mike McCoy – SWIA – President
619-423-0495, mccoy4ib@aol.com

Charles Bradshaw – US Naval Base Coronado – Community Plans and Liaison Officer
619-545-4134, charles.p.bradshaw3.civ@us.navy.mil

Loni Beyer Wilson – US Naval Base Coronado – Natural Resources Manager
619-545-5551, loni.j.beyerwilson.civ@us.navy.mil

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

Jim Harry – City of San Diego – Stormwater Department
858-541-4353 or 619-247-5661, jharry@sandiego.gov

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

Larry Borden – USBP – Border Patrol, Special Operations Supervisor
LARRY.BORDEN@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

Ashley Reineman – California Coastal Commission – Federal Programs Manager
805-585-1800, ashley.reineman@coastal.ca.gov

Chelsea Jander – California Coastal Commission – Coastal Program Analyst
Chelsea.Jander@coastal.ca.gov

Gemma Waaland – NOAA's Office for Coastal Management – NERR Liaison
707-495-2623, gemma.waaland@noaa.gov

Program Managers Present:

Chris Peregrin – TRNERR – Reserve Manager

619-575-3615 ext. 303, chris.peregrin@parks.ca.gov

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

Ransses Lopez, TRNERR

Marya Ahmad, CA State Parks

Lynn Reizer-Heftmann, TRVEA

Chris Jonsmyr, Asm. Alvarez

Mayda Winter, SWIA

Natalie Mladenov, SDSU

Sally Spener, IBWC

Blanca, Public

619-***-*764, Public

Stephany Garcia, TRNERR

Jill Terp, USFWS

Kiran Seibel, SD County Parks

Dennis Larson, Nexus

Meagan Openshaw, City of Imperial Beach

Mona Kuczenski, Friends of Friendship Park

Callie Summerlin, Public

Joe Ellis, Public

Jim Peugh, SD Audubon

1. 1:05 pm Meeting was called to order.

2. AGENDA – February 6, 2024, agenda was adopted.

3. LAST MEETING MINUTES – November 7, 2023, minutes were adopted.

4. Member Comments

Sam Jenniches – State Coastal Conservancy – Project Manager

- a. The Coastal Conservancy board meeting will be on February 15th in Newport Beach, and up for consideration is an initial grant amount of \$30 million to SWIA for implementation of the Tijuana Estuary Tidal Restoration Program (TETRP) II Phase I. Additionally regarding TETRP, the State Coastal Conservancy has been asked to submit a full proposal to NOAA for the Coastal Resilience Program.
- b. A full application was submitted to the Navy’s Sentinel Landscapes Program in mid-January including partners at the Port of SD and many stakeholders.
- c. Pre-applications are due March 31st for the State Coastal Conservancy’s Coastal Stories Program, coastalstories@scc.ca.gov which helps grantees share their coastal stories and experiences about relationships and work on the coast.

Lisa Tomas – California State Parks – District Superintendent I

- a. Currently State Parks are under a spending freeze which only allows for mission critical spending. More information regarding the budget will be available after the current tax season.

Andy Yuen – USFWS – SDNWRC Project Leader

- a. S.Brown was hired as the new Refuge Manager for the Tijuana Slough and San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuges.
- b. The FWS is still running on a continuing resolution until at least March as there is not yet a new budget.
- c. The TSNWR and California State Parks together will re-apply for a US Corps of Army Engineers permit to dredge the Tijuana River mouth if and when it closes.

Charles Bradshaw – US Naval Base Coronado – Community Plans and Liaison Officer

- a. C.Bradshaw is Anna Shepherd's replacement at Naval Base Coronado, his area of coverage includes from North Island to the Tijuana Estuary and from San Clemente Island to training facilities in the east.

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

- a. The City has been preparing for the rains and is getting numerous phone calls from residents in the river valley who are voicing their concerns about the Tijuana River flooding issues.
- b. C.Helmer visited Washington DC the previous week and met with entities there about issues regarding the Tijuana River in an attempt at insuring \$310 million of funds for the IBWC to expand and repair the wastewater treatment plant and find possible future comprehensive solutions for the river valley. Helmer noted that both the Republicans and Democrats are aware of the issue, and he worked on getting a coalition of Republican House members to lead a bill or support the supplemental funding for it.

Jim Harry – City of San Diego – Stormwater Department

- a. J.Harry, the manager for the Watershed Planning Section of the City of San Diego, is replacing Andrew Funk for these quarterly meetings.
- b. A dispatch number has been set up for anyone to call who is having flooding issues due to the rainstorm. City of San Diego dispatch center for flooding reports 619-527-7500.

Ashley Reineman – California Coastal Commission – Federal Programs Manager

- a. The upcoming Commission hearing on February 9th has agenda item #7a that will be primarily Commissioner/Mayor Aguirre's update on the trip to Washington DC. regarding the transboundary pollution crises issues.

Mike Verderber – SD County Parks – Supervising Park Ranger

- a. *Not present, was responding to flooding emergency.*

Kiran Seibel – SD County Parks - Land Use/Environmental Planner

- a. Regarding the CA Coastal Trail connection that is being funded by the Coastal Conservancy, the feasibility study is finishing up and there will be a virtual public meeting on Feb. 15th, at 5:30 pm. A link to the meeting will be available on <https://www.sdparks.org/publicmeetings/> the day before the meeting.

Mike McCoy – SWIA – President

- a. The main projects being worked on are related to TETRP and Dr. McCoy thanked M.Winter, Dr. J.Crooks and S.Jenniches for all their efforts in that regard.
- b. On the administrative side, SWIA is doing a lot of work with other organizations to keep ahead of the game on fundraising efforts.
- c. Following queries from Dr. McCoy about funding opportunities for TETRP II Phase I through NOAA's Climate Resilience Regional Challenge, he and Dr. Crooks discussed potential for funding and some of the challenges associated with implementation of the project.

Morgan Rogers – USIBWC – Area Operations Manager

- a. Storms impact update: the Jan. 22nd storm was the 4th largest flow registered since the IBWC started tracking the flows in 1962 and resulted in 3 billion gallons per day of flow down the river. The large flows combined with trash and debris coming down the river has not caused significant damage to the plant. The current flow of 3 billion gallons per day is above the 25 billion gallons per day capacity so the overflow has been diverted or "bypassed" to the South Bay Ocean Outfall pipe. Clean up strategies are to be considered after the rains subside with further updates available on flow levels as data is obtained.
- b. As per normal, the collectors are out of service because of the excess sediment in the system which is likely due to lack of erosion control in Mexico. The Hollister Street pump station is out of service.
- c. Needed repairs to the 42-inch pipeline in Mexico, which ruptured in July 2022, were completed in November 2023, and later were not yielding the reduced flows that were anticipated. A meeting with the American and Mexican officials determined that reduced capacity of the pipeline was due to facilitating highway construction which should be finished by February or March.
- d. When asked by Dr. McCoy if Tijuana has any formal process for collecting waste before it gets in the canyons and arroyos, M.Rogers answered that there is not really a consistent system for either trash or recycling in place for all communities. S.Spener, IBWC, added to the conversation that through the Minute 320 program there are some neighborhood specific proposed projects in Mexico which are not yet funded that could prevent solid waste from entering the watershed. S.Spener also stated that the San Antonio de las Buenos plant should be up and running by the end of September and will reduce untreated waste from going into the ocean six miles south of the border. C.Peregrin and K.Goodrich further highlighted the effort here at the Reserve toward the Binational Emergency Response Guide which looks at storm flooding and the impact of trash on debris related flooding.

Gemma Waaland – NOAA – NERR Site Liaison

- a. G.Waaland posted in the chat that she and Christy Kehoe (NOAA Marine Debris Coordinator) will continue to monitor the storms impact to the TRNERR. They have been highlighting the importance of these issues to their respective NOAA division leadership teams, the Regional Director, Rebecca Smyth, and have escalated reports out to the National Office of Coastal Management Director, Jeff Payne, to keep him informed. If there are questions, contact gemma.waaland@noaa.gov.

Chelsea Jander – California Coastal Commission – Local Coastal Planner

- a. C.Jander posted links for the upcoming February Commission meeting.
Agenda: <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/meetings/agenda/#/2024/2>
CCC live stream: https://cal-span.org/meeting/ccc_20240207-20240209/live

5. **Program Manager Reports**

Sally Brown – USFWS – Refuge Manager

- a. S.Brown introduced herself as the new refuge manager for the Tijuana Slough National Wildlife Refuge and the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Chris Peregrin – TRNERR – Reserve Manager Report

- a. Although Border Field State Park is closed due to flooding, it was approved through the state budget to work on developing a Border Education Plaza for an interpretative element of the park at Monument Mesa; there was a kickoff for this multi-year effort.

Anne Marie Tipton – TRNERR – Education Report

- a. *Refer to written program manager reports*
<https://trnerr.org/about/advisory-council/>

Jeff Crooks – TRNERR – Research Report

- a. *Refer to written program manager reports*
<https://trnerr.org/about/advisory-council/>

Lorena Warner-Lara – TRNERR – Stewardship Report

- a. *Refer to written program manager reports*
<https://trnerr.org/about/advisory-council/>

Kristen Goodrich – TRNERR – Coastal Training Program Report

- a. *Refer to written program manager reports*
<https://trnerr.org/about/advisory-council/>

5. **New Business**

- a. Dr. Natalie Mladenov (SDSU) gave a presentation on evaluating the potential for real-time water quality monitoring of sewage pollution in the Tijuana River Estuary.

Email: nmladenov@sdsu.edu

Presentation link: https://trnerr.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Mladenov_TJ-River-Monitoring_2024v4.pdf

- b. Meagan Openshaw (City of IB, Director of Community Development) and Dennis Larson (Nexus Planning) provided an update on the Imperial Beach Community Resilience Plan.

Presentation link: https://trnerr.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/IBCRP_TRNERR-AC_20240206.pdf

Public workshops will be held in early May.

6. Public Comment

M.McCoy, SWIA

Question for D.Larson: The area near the Grove Ave. bridge, on the east side of estuary, creates a real sump that is difficult to keep cleaned up, there is a lot of toxic material there, due to a lot of drainage coming in with high sea level that don't allow for movement of water. Is there a way to address this?

D. Larson Answer: He made a note of this. This is the kind of information that is going to be used in the next phase of the plan. The plan is to work with the City of Imperial Beach to look for funding and do the feasibility studies related to hydraulics and biology related to what Dr. McCoy mentions.

C.Jonsmyr, Assemblymember Alvarez Office

Comment: Assemblymember Alvarez has introduced AJR-12 to get the CA legislature to state their support for the federal \$310M funding ask and emergency declaration. Letters of support can be sent to C.Jonsmyr at chris.jonsmyr@asm.ca.gov, deadline is two weeks. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AJR12

7. Future Agenda Considerations

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*).

8. TRNERR MEETINGS for Advisory Council – In-person and Virtual @1pm

Future TRNERR Advisory Council meetings:

- Tuesday, May 7, 2024
- Tuesday, August 6, 2024
- Tuesday, November 5, 2024

9. TRNERR Trails Committee meeting

- Tuesday, February 13, 2024

10. Adjourned at 2:27PM

The meeting was adjourned.