

**Tri-County F.I.S.H. Team
(Funding for Improved Salmonid Habitat)**

**Santa Barbara Public Library
40 East Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara
Faulkner Gallery
Thursday, July 22, 2004
1:00 to 4:00**

Minutes

Meeting Participants

Stevie Adams, CSUN
Rob Almy, Santa Barbara County Water Agency
Michael Clarke, City of San Luis Obispo
Don Davis, City of Ventura
Rosie Dyste, Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Dept.
Dennis Harper, Matilija Fly Fishers
Richard Hawley, Greenspace – The Cambria Land Trust
John Johnson, Casitas Municipal Water District
Rory Lang, Santa Barbara County Water Agency
Kate Rees, Cachuma Conservation Release Board
Karen Waln, City of Ventura
Eric Wier, San Luis Obispo County Public Works Department

Item 1: Introduction

Ms. Lang welcomed everyone to the meeting at approximately 1:10 pm and began the meeting by introducing herself and having all attendees do the same.

Item 2: Permit Streamlining

One of the goals of the TCFT is the development of a streamlined permitting process for restoration projects within the tri-county area. To this end, Ms. Lang has met with the representatives of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project and staff at the Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Department to initiate discussions regarding this process and the role of the TCFT. Ms. Dyste was invited to the TCFT meeting to discuss the permit streamlining activities being considered by the Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Department and to assist the TCFT with further development of the activities that should be undertaken. Ms. Dyste had been conducting research regarding funding from the Coastal Conservancy for a permit coordination program for restoration projects. She had found that both Humboldt and Santa Cruz Counties have received funds for this type of project (see attached feasibility study) and the Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Department was considering the development of a grant proposal for a program locally.

The feasibility study was prepared for Santa Cruz County by the group Sustainable Conservation. Sustainable Conservation worked with the U.S. Department of

Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District (SCCRCD) to develop a countywide permit coordination program for Santa Cruz County based on the Partners in Restoration (PIR) model developed in 1998 by the NRCS and Sustainable Conservation. The purpose of the study was to assess the feasibility of obtaining necessary regulatory approvals for the PIR Program for Santa Cruz and identify a long-term management and funding strategy to implement the program once it is in place.

The roundtable discussion focused on how this information could be utilized by the TCFT and other interested parties to further the permit streamlining efforts locally. The ultimate goal would be to have a functional tool that explained how to conduct each activity appropriately and what permits were required for that activity.

Other local efforts regarding permit streamlining were discussed including the agricultural permitting program that Santa Barbara County Planning and Development is working on, the general permit for *Arundo* removal obtained by the Ventura County RCD, and the City of San Luis Obispo's Zone 9 permitting for routine vegetation removal. It was noted that a regional effort would be more general with each county allowing for variations by altering the final product as appropriate. Additionally the importance of involving representatives from SCWRP as well as planning departments from Ventura and SLO counties and other agencies was emphasized.

A suggested list of materials needed for the process was also developed by the group including:

- A list of potential activities for streamlining
- List of potential funding sources
- List of potential partners
- List of resources (like the TCFT's BMP Report).

Meeting attendees agreed that pursuing funds from the Coastal Conservancy to conduct a feasibility study was an appropriate next step. Additionally the group recommended a conference call between the TCFT Executive Committee and representatives from Sustainable Conservation or perhaps having them attend the next TCFT public meeting to find out which activities they had approved through their process and any recommendations they may have for the local effort.

Technical Recovery Team Update

Michael Clarke provided an update on TRT activities. The TRT is currently working on two main areas – population identification and research priorities.

The TRT will use currently available information from monitoring efforts and some habitat modeling programs to assist them with population identification and classification. TRT members discussed methods appropriate to delineate viable independent populations of steelhead within the South central ESU. Dividing populations by coastal basin was agreed upon as a logical first step. Coastal basin populations were then further divided according to the presence/absence/location of an

"Alluvium Mask" within the basin. The rationale behind this being that alluvium is poor steelhead habitat that would act as a natural barrier separating spawning individuals from truly independent populations. Sub-populations within a basin would be merged if separated by <10 km stream distance.

The TRT members agreed that 'straying rates' between populations should be investigated and the results incorporated in to the model. Straying rate is a measure of the degree of fidelity steelhead have to natal streams.

The current uncertainty about steelhead ecology in the south means that it is very difficult for the TRT to fulfill its charge, which is to make meaningful, credible recommendations regarding viability and recovery of each ESU. The TRT is identifying key research questions that will improve their ability to make meaningful, credible recommendations. In addition to determining which areas of research will provide the most benefit, the TRT must consider that there are factors that impede the ability of local entities to conduct research – mainly “take” of fish and lack of funding. So the TRT plans to (1) identify a set of key research topics regarding the uniqueness of southern steelhead ecology; and (2) rank them in terms of their importance to recovery and viability.

TCFT RFP for 2004/2005 Work Plan

Ms. Lang provided an update on the tasks in each of the TCFT work plans for CIAP funding and DFG funding. A Request for Proposals has been developed and will be sent to local consultants for completion of the following tasks:

- A. Report on Permit Streamlining Process for the TCFT.
- B. Workshop curricula including appropriate handouts and specifications for field sites for demonstrations for 3 workshops.
- C. Prioritization method and prioritized projects list for projects from the San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura County projects listed in the California Fish Passage Assessment Database.
- D. Framework and protocol for road crossings barrier assessment.
- E. Methodology for completing project prioritization.
- F. Updated BMP Report including BMPs for site clearing, bridge/low water crossing construction and maintenance, and livestock grazing.

The distribution date for the RFP will be in August with a submittal date in September. The TCFT Executive Committee Plans to conduct the selection process in October.

All of the tasks under the CIAP work plan that were the responsibility of the Local Coordinator have been completed. In addition, the Local Coordinator has conducted 1

public meeting (July 22) and 1 Executive Committee meeting (July 22) as required under the DFG grant for 2004/2005. The remaining tasks will be completed between August 2004 and August 2005.

Local Salmonid Festival

Ms. Lang reported that there is interest in developing a Steelhead Festival for Santa Barbara County. Matt McGoogan of NOAA Fisheries had contacted Ms. Lang asking her to propose the idea to the TCFT. NOAA Fisheries was hoping to assist local agencies interested in having a steelhead festival this fall, possibly as a part of October's Creek Week since that was also Salmon and Steelhead Awareness Month. Mr. McGoogan was interested in establishing a list of interested agencies and non-profit groups that would participate in such an event in hopes that an organization committee could be created. Such a festival would provide connectivity between different groups and organizations that are conducting steelhead restoration, some of whom may not normally have any contact with each other. The festival would also be a great way to acknowledge the work that has been done locally. In addition, it would provide an opportunity to provide information to the public about local restoration efforts and other steelhead issues, as well as the resources available to them if they were interested in becoming involved with such efforts. Ideas that were suggested include having the festival in a local park with information stands put together from different agencies and/or local groups/individuals on different projects or services they offer in terms of steelhead, which may also include creek restoration efforts that impact steelhead habitat. In addition to that maybe there could be any number of things including music, speakers, food, fund raising and public outreach opportunities.

Participant Updates

Meeting attendees provided brief overviews of current projects underway by their agencies.

Wrap-Up

The next TCFT Public Meeting will be held in Ventura on October 28, 2004. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.