

**WESTERN PLACER COLLABORATIVE WATERSHED COUNCIL**  
**MEETING**  
**May 3, 2005**

The meeting of the Western Placer Collaborative Watershed Council was called to order by Rich Gresham, Placer County Resource Conservation District (PCRCD), in the City Rocklin Corporation Yard Conference Room at 10:08 a.m.

Rich Gresham thanked everyone for coming and indicated the joint meetings are meant to serve as a forum to identify and discuss watershed issues that cross watershed boundaries.

**PRESENT:** Rich Gresham and Katie Maloney, PCRCD; Gregg Bates, Dry Creek Conservancy (DCC); Marilyn Jasper, Sierra Club and Clover Valley Foundation; Erwin Hayer, Rio Linda Chamber of Commerce and Community Planning Advisory Council; Brian Keating, Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (PCFC&WCD); Mark Morse, City of Roseville; Craig Benson, Sutter County Watershed Coordinator; Lydia Sizelove, City of Rocklin; Gail Mackenroth, Sierra Club; Ernie McPherson, Roseville Neighborhood Association and Friends and Lovers of Miners Ravine; Edmund Sullivan, Placer County Senior Planner - Natural Resources; Bill Templin, American River Watershed Coordinator; Sara Ross, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency; Loren May, May & Associates; Mal Toy, Placer County Water Agency; Carl Walker, City of Lincoln; and Mary Paasch, MWH.

**1. BUSINESS:**

**a) *Invasive Species Management & Stream Restoration:***

Loran May of May & Associates, Inc. gave an overview of SAFCA's Prop 13 funded Dry Creek Watershed Red Sesbania Control Project with the goals of improving flood water conveyance, aiding the restoration of natural processes, contributing to the statewide effort to control Red Sesbania, and eliminating a large key source population in the upper watershed, and restore recreational and habitat values.

Loran handed out and reviewed materials related to the project and stressed the importance of a concerted effort to eradicate invasives like Red Sesbania before they become established.

Excerpts of her handout materials are as follows:

- Dry Creek Watershed Project Area:
  - All publicly owned and accessible privately owned lands of 100 square mile Dry Creek watershed
  - Waterways included in project area:
    - Dry Creek & Linda Creek in Sacramento County
    - Dry Creek, Miner's Ravine, Secret Ravine, Strap Ravine, Antelope Creek, Linda Creek, & Cirby Creek in Placer County
- Highlights of 2004 Activities:
  - Prepared baseline Red Sesbania mapping - 13.76 acres mapped including concurrent mapping of other invasives
  - Secured project permits with sensitive species protections for anadromous fish and Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle
    - Timing restrictions – treatment of plants before October and removal of biomass from active floodplain before November to protect fish and flood way conveyance

- Herbicide restrictions – requirements to use herbicides approved for use near water and follow anadromous fish EPA guidelines
  - Removal method restrictions – use of small, fast moving crews using hand removal methods for sparse infestations, or a combination of hand & mechanical removal for moderate and dense infestations
- Prepared contractor bids specifications
  - Defined work area upper limits of Red Sesbania mapping plus a buffer
  - Required contractor to adhere to sensitive species & floodway protections
  - Required yearly inspections of work area
  - Required contractor to treat biomass in a manner that expedited natural breakdown of biomass and prevented spread from disposal sites
  - Required multiple treatments of Red Sesbania & re-sprouts resulting in sustained control by end of project in June 2006
- Awarded contract to Restoration Resources
  - Completed removal of 80% of all mature Red Sesbania plants by November 2004
  - Treated all biomass (chipped, crushed, left in approved containment areas)
  - Repeatedly inspected treatment area for any remaining mature plants of vegetation biomass, completed removal from active floodway
- Conducted nursery outreach to raise awareness of Red Sesbania entering wildlands from landscaped areas and backyards
- Future Activities 2005-2006
  - Test study of seedling flaming – April
  - Removal of remaining 20% mature plants
  - Inspection & re-treatment of entire project area 2-3 times per year
  - Annual performance monitoring
  - Preparation of annual “punch list” of items requiring attention
  - Preparation of final report documenting results of the project & “lessons learned”
- Where do we go from here?
  - Future project sponsorship – need to identify a future grant proponent & administrator
  - Continued treatment of Red Sesbania – need for continued monitoring & treatment of re-sprouts and seedlings – a 25 year seed-bank needs to be exhausted – suggests an ongoing maintenance contract with professional herbicide applicator/contractor to perform ongoing annual monitoring & treatment
  - Expand control program to address other invasive plants – Red Sesbania mapping surveys detected several other species of concern (Giant Reed, Pampas Grass, Chinese Tallow Tree, Catalpa, & Fennel)
  - Build Stewardship – continue to build community good will & foster partnerships with existing volunteer organizations
  - Provide volunteer opportunities – Creek Week & Adopt-a-Creek – opportunities may be limited due to private ownership of most watershed lands

- Continue outreach & education – continue to partner & share information with upstream land managers about Red Sesbania detection & control – it was noted that Red Sesbania has been found in the Hidden Lakes area away from water suggesting the possibility that the plant can make the jump away from waterways

Council discussion revolved around possible public outreach efforts that could be folded into existing programs like Roseville’s public outreach effort regarding flood protection, the need to build and support stewardship efforts, the pursuit of additional grants to continue efforts, and the building of partnerships to address watershed-wide issues including invasives.

Loran suggested the current project can be used as a template for other efforts.

The council thanked Loran for her update and requested she entertain the possibility of addressing the larger Collaborative Western Placer Watershed Group at a future meeting about invasives, the control techniques implemented, and “lessons learned”.

**b) Loomis Basin Water Efficiency Study - Placer County Water Agency:**

Edmund Sullivan reported that western Placer County seems to have a beaver problem that is impacting flood control, fish passage, and mosquito control. He noted beaver are not native to the area and are impacting the local ecosystems, presenting the challenge of how to create ecological balance in concert with the presence of beaver.

Edmund noted the collaborative meeting provides a forum for the free flow of ideas and an opportunity to develop a collaborative solution to common watershed issues like beaver and solicited feedback from participants.

Terry Shirhall, Environmental Specialist for the City of Roseville, handed out copies of Roseville’s adopted beaver management policy and briefly reviewed the document.

Garth Gaylord, City of Roseville, added beaver are impacting flood control management in Roseville.

Mary Tappel, Beaver Management Consultant, noted beaver are often present in a larger number than folks realize. She noted established native trees can be devastated by beaver populations and reviewed the challenge of taking down beaver dams that are often re-built in a night. She noted it is more effective to remove the dam building beaver and informed not all beaver are dam builders. She noted a gun shot mimics the beaver’s natural danger signal of a tail slap on the water and indicated she feels it is more humane to shoot beaver than trapping and sterilization techniques.

Mary pointed out the City of Roseville Beaver Management Policy uses many of the techniques being utilized by the City of Sacramento and has undergone review by animal rights groups like People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and the US Humane Society.

Christine Turner inquired as to beaver population numbers.

Mary estimated several dozen beaver are in the area and with the average of three young per year surviving, there is a large population growth factor.

Kent Foster noted newer design methods take beaver into consideration by placing storm drains at higher elevations.

Mary stressed beaver populations are grossly underestimated and indicated beaver “eat out” can lead to ecosystem collapse.

Mary pointed out river otter predate only on newborn beaver, but are resulting in fewer predation permits being issued in the Ueda Parkway.

Beaver colonies build 3-5 dams along a stream that have year round water. Many control methods are low cost and can be utilized by private landowners. Dominant males of a breeding colony typically maintain the dams and young out migrate at 3-4 years old. Relocation is no longer favored as a control measure.

Mary fielded questions from the group, handed out additional information on progressive beaver management techniques being utilized by the City of Sacramento in their riparian public parkways. The techniques emphasize low-cost, non-toxic, ecological methods and include wire wrapping of threatened trees, using pond levelers, luring beaver away from sensitive restoration plantings, exclusion fencing, gnawing deterrents, culvert screening, providing alternative forage, and the use of predator feces to deter beaver from sensitive restoration areas.

Edmund initiated discussion regarding potential joint solutions to beaver impacts.

Christine Turner, Placer County Agricultural Commissioner informed the group that her department has hunters and trappers available to municipalities and private landowners at no charge. She indicated predation is always a last resort and encouraged developing a collaborative approach to the beaver problem.

Mary offered her expertise to those interested in additional information.

Kathy Russick, Sacramento River Watershed Program Coordinator noted Mary will be writing an article about beaver management and offered to provide web links to the information.

Edmund closed discussion for the time being by encouraging further discussion and challenging the group to think about how to address the issue by possibly creating a memorandum of understanding to work together in a cooperative manner.

**c) *American River Basin Conservancy:***

Edmund introduced Gregg Bates, Executive Director of the Dry Creek Conservancy (DCC) and noted his interest in developing an American River Basin Conservancy.

Gregg Bates handed out information about the DCC and reviewed the history of the concept of an American River Basin Conservancy that included an unsuccessful attempt to gain grant funding for its formation. Gregg indicated the DCC could serve as a model for the development of the proposed conservancy and stressed the entity would look for opportunities to collaborate on regional issues.

Edmund noted non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are able to tap into funding sources that governmental entities are not eligible for. He noted the contributions DCC has made as a member of the Dry Creek Watershed Council including being a founding member, conducting public education, and monitoring and data gathering efforts.

Gregg noted the importance of developing partnerships in terms of funding sources, facilitation, and ongoing support.

Group discussion revolved around the need to identify conservancy proponents, boundaries, funding sources, and sustainability, and organizational structure.

Edmund closed discussion by noting models are available for the potential formation of a conservancy and solicited partners interested in the concept.

**2. OPEN DISCUSSION:**

None.

**4. NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND ADJOURNMENT**

Edmund inquired if the group would like to continue meeting and how often. He suggested they might consider meeting quarterly in lieu of their regular monthly watershed group meeting.

The group supported meeting every quarter and no objections were voiced regarding eliminating a monthly meeting in lieu of the quarterly meeting.

The groups suggested topics for future meetings including NPDES Phase II, Ag Waivers, water quality, fish issues, watershed group sustainability, and invasives.

The next Western Placer Collaborative Watershed Council meeting will be held on May 3, 2005 at the Rocklin Corporation Yard.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m.