



**Steering Committee Meeting Notes  
May 28, 2015 10:00am-12:00pm**

**Participants**

**Steering Committee Members**

Ellie Cohen – Chair, Point Blue Conservation Science

Michelle Selmon – Vice Chair, CA Dept. of Water Resources

Sarah Allen – National Park Service

Natalie C-Manning – NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service

Michelle Denning – Bureau of Reclamation

Carolyn Enquist – Southwest Climate Science Center

Tom Hedt – Natural Resources Conservation Service

Chrissy Howell – US Forest Service

Kevin Hunting – CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

Ruth Ostroff – Central Valley Joint Venture

Pat Rutten - NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service

Wayne Spencer – Conservation Biology Institute

Laura Valoppi – US Geological Survey

Miriam Morrill – Bureau of Land Management

**CA LCC Staff**

Debra Schlafmann – Coordinator

Rebecca Fris – Science Coordinator

Andrea Graffis – Communication Coordinator

Deanne DiPietro – Data Manager

Amber Pairis – San Diego Climate Science Alliance Coordinator

Karen Thorne – Science Advisor, US Geological Survey

**Meeting Objectives**

- Learn about our partners work; the Resilient Lands Initiative including Russian River Blueprint
- Review and approve 2015 ecosystem processes projects
- Understand potential opportunities with Prop 1 funding
- Updates and next in-person meeting

## **Presidents Resilient Lands & Waters Initiative**

- The Department of the Interior is leading this initiative to move the President’s Climate Action Plan forward to “Enhance the Climate Resilience of America’s Natural Resources.” The projects being announced protect important landscapes and develop the science, planning, and tools needed to support resilient landscapes.
- Announced projects are located in Florida, Puget Sound, Hawaii, and Crown of the Continent. Study area that encompasses Russian River Watershed, Headwaters, and Gulf of Farallones/Cordell Bank will be announced next week. There is no money associated with this. Agencies will work off existing resources.

## **Presentation by Natalie and Pat:**

### **NOAA Habitat Focus Area - The Russian River Blueprint; Place based Collaboration**

- NOAA Coastal Community Resilience grants – \$5M on community resilience projects. NOAA Fisheries \$4M for coastal ecosystem resilience projects. Natalie C-Manning has info.
- Purpose of Blueprint is to integrate habitat conservation throughout NOAA focus areas and collaborate with others. Blueprint Project Objectives: salmon habitat improvements, hydrology monitoring and modeling, and community and ecosystem resilience to flooding and drought
- Blueprint Project Types:
  - Collaborative – NOAA working within the agency
  - Habitat and Conservation Partner projects – NOAA working with external partners
  - Complementary initiatives – NOAA develops new partnerships
- Pat Rutten said somewhere in the bay is a possibility for Habitat Focus Area in the future, also potentially down the coast in Southern California. The projects in Russian River Blueprint are in year 2 and NOAA wants to finish by year 5.

## **Projects in Russian River Estuary:**

1. Collaborative Project with NMFS, Sea Grant, OAR, NOS, Sonoma County Water Agency, PWA, Bodega Marine Lab – when estuary closes what habitat is available for fisheries/aquatic resources, to facilitate management options.

2. Collaborative Project with – COSMOS Model, NOAA and USGS and water agencies for future climate scenarios
3. Coastal Monitoring Plan with NOAA, UC Coop Ext., water agencies, and CDFW. Monitoring fish movement with PIT tags tracking through watershed to see where they go and what habitats they use.
4. Westminster Woods – Christian Camp was drawing water out of tributary and potentially causing impacts on Coho salmon spawning. Will take camp off creek water.
5. Russian River Tributary Hydrologic Study – understanding natural versus anthropogenic changes in tributary, how to manage water better.
6. Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement, tributary to Russian River. Local landowners did habitat restoration for juvenile Coho and steelhead to create backwater habitat. Within 3 month of completion noted fish using area.
7. Improving Frost Predictions and Protections for Vineyards – stop using local tributaries to water vineyards to prevent frost damage, use fans instead, and water conservation tanks; also better prediction of frost occurrence.
8. Improve Precipitation and River Flow forecasting to maximize water capture for reservoirs with NOAA, USGS, USACE, water agencies, DWR. How to capture atmospheric rivers in dams so it is available for future use.

### **Hydrologic Processes Proposals and Science Management Team Recommendations**

- During the January in-person Steering Committee meeting we decided to focus the RFP on increasing the understanding of the impacts of changing hydrologic regimes and processes on species, habitats and ecosystems. This meets Science-Management Framework Objective 2.
- Proposal Review Team members included Science-Management Team members and a few expert hydrologists as outside reviewers.
- We received 12 proposals asking for \$1.6 million. The review team has three projects recommended for funding at \$373,000 and two alternates identified in case more funds become available. There may be remaining project dollars after staff reviews the budget. Staff will come up with a recommendation for those funds and will bring that to the Steering Committee.
- Projects include:
  1. American Rivers, Protecting the Headwaters in a Changing Climate: Managing Sierra Nevada Meadows for Water Supply & Habitat Benefits - \$30,000
  2. UC Davis, Assessing the impacts of future climates and fire on hydrologic regimes in the Mediterranean type ecosystems of southern California- \$150,000

3. Conservation Science Partners, Effects of changing hydroperiod on reproductive occupancy of threatened Central California tiger salamander in vernal pool and seasonal wetlands in the CA Central Valley under different climate scenarios - \$192,000

Alternate #1: Desert Research Institute, Leveraging landscape-scale retrospective and near real-time data to enhance understanding of meadow ecosystem responses to climate and management activities in the Sierra Nevada Ecoregion - \$134,000

Alternate #2: State Coastal Conservancy, Submerged Habitat Futures: Climate Change Impacts on San Francisco Bay Subtidal Ecosystems - \$73,000

**Vote:** Unanimous approval of projects by Steering Committee

**Action:** CA LCC staff will reconcile budget and develop recommendation for any remaining project funds for Steering Committee

#### **Tribal/TEK Team Update**

- Planning moving forward with Tribal Climate Adaptation Workshop and aiming for Southern California Coast as location. Basing curriculum off of the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals materials.
  - **Action:** Amber Pairis will help support workshop
  - **Action:** Michelle will send out information for the timing of the workshop once that is finalized.

#### **National Academy of Science (NAS) Review Update**

- Wayne, Michelle, Carolyn, and Rodd went to Irvine to meet with NAS review panel. Meeting went very well! The final NAS LCC review report should be out in November.

**Action:** Deb has LCC summary info that was developed for NAS and can send to anyone interested.

#### **National Adaptation Forum (NAF)**

- CA LCC held two successful symposiums at the NAF in St. Louis
- Amber reported: 800 plus attendees, multi sector focus, LCCs very present, San Diego Climate Science Alliance gave a presentation
- Summer 2016 California Adaptation Forum potentially targeted for Southern California

#### **Southwest Climate Summit** - November 2-3 in Sacramento

- Hosts: Southwest Climate Science Center, California LCC, Desert LCC, Great Basin LCC and USDA Southwest Climate Hub and others.
- Save the Date went out last week for November 2-3, 2015 in Sacramento.

- Planning team is working on sessions. We will be contacting you directly or sending a group request to involve SC members.

### **Proposition 1 Funding**

- \$1.5 Billion to protect rivers, lakes, streams, coastal waters and watersheds. \$327M for Conservancies, \$200M for WCB for enhanced stream flows, \$475M to Nat Resources Agencies for CVPIA (refuge water supply, Tahoe, Colorado settlement, SJR settlement, intrastate settlement), \$285M to DFW for non-Delta watershed restoration (restoration, science, beneficial reuse of dredge materials/LTMS) and \$88M for Delta, \$510M to Integrated Regional Water Management, \$395 for storm/flood management to DWR and CV Flood Protection).
- The CA LCC would like to develop projects with extended partners. There is a push for “shovel ready” projects. Some potential focus areas are flood plains, setback levees, restoration, etc. to have better conservation of water.
- Possible opportunities with State Conservancies to incorporate Climate-Smart principles. They may be sending out a solicitation in August/September.

**Action:** Deb to gather a small group explore where CA LCC could plug in to Prop. 1. Possible looking to direct funds to non-LCC funded project proposals.

**Action:** Steering Committee members to provide info to Deb if you know who decision makers are for Prop. 1 funds.

**Action:** Pat is talking with Sam Schuchat and Kevin Shaffer on details of Prop. 1.

**Action:** Michelle will look into how Prop. 1 is organized in DWR.

**Next meeting date - TBD**

**December 17-18 is next in-person SC meeting. Location TBD.**

**Action: Deb will send out an email to vote on a couple location options.**