



Minutes

Measure M2 Environmental Oversight Committee

Committee Members

Lisa Bartlett, Chairman

Melanie Schlotterbeck, Vice Chair

Charles Baker, Caltrans District 12

Dr. David Chapel, Grand Jury Assoc. of O.C.

David Mayer, CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

Dan Silver, Endangered Habitats League

Jonathan Snyder, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Anthony Villa, Taxpayers Oversight Comm.

Walsh, CA Wildlife Conservation Board

Orange County Transportation Authority

500 South Main Street, Room 07

Orange, California

Wednesday October 26, 2016

2:30 p.m.

Member(s) Absent

Lori Donchak, Board of Directors

Veronica Li, US Army Corp of Engineers

Derek McGregor, DMc Engineering John

Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should contact the OCTA Clerk of the Board, telephone (714) 560-5676, no less than two (2) business days prior to this meeting to enable OCTA to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to this meeting.

1. Welcome

Chairman Lisa Bartlett called the Environmental Oversight Committee (EOC) meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-Chairman Melanie Schlotterbeck led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of August 1, 2016 Minutes

Chairman Lisa Bartlett asked if there were any additions or corrections to the August 1, 2016 EOC minutes.

Melanie Schlotterbeck said on page 5, Item 10, the last sentence says request for proposal. It should say resource management plan.

A motion was made by Melanie Schlotterbeck to approve the minutes with change, seconded by Dan Silver and passed unanimously to approve the August 1, 2016 EOC meeting minutes as presented.

4. Final Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement

Monte Ward gave a brief history of the Natural Community Conservation Plan Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) and the Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/S) to date. Lesley Hill gave an overview of the NCCP/HCP and the EIR/S process. Dan Phu provided an overview of the recommendations and next steps for the Program.

Chairman Lisa Bartlett thanked and acknowledged OCTA and its partners. She highlighted the significant milestone this project represents.

Dan Silver said this program has exceeded our targets on everything but grasslands. He said it is unclear if there needs to be more grasslands included on future acquisitions. Lesley Hill said if you look at the full picture, the grasslands that are being impacted are within the freeway rights of way. She said those grasslands are in most cases non-native degraded/maintained grasslands and the grasslands within the Preserves are of much higher quality native grasslands. We do not have a need for additional grassland mitigation because of the quality preserved and also the fact that we were able to exceed the acreage target for many of the other habitat types within the Plan. She said when it comes to freeway project level analysis, there is a requirement for the biological document to include a description of the grasslands proposed for impacts. The document should assess the grassland quality and also if they contribute to important open space connections.

Dan Silver asked for a list of other needs/gaps as the committee considers future acquisitions. He specifically noted the Arroyo Chub fish. Lesley Hill said she would get that information to the committee.

Dan Silver asked about the section under major amendments where it says if new conservation credits or properties come into play, there needs to be an amendment. Jonathan Snyder clarified it would not take a major amendment to bring in new properties, but if you used those projects to exceed the cap it would then require a major amendment. You can't increase credits to offset impacts. The intent is you cannot bring in new properties to offset freeway projects beyond the cap.

Dan Silver said this committee spent a lot of good quality time at the beginning laying down the ground work for this plan and it was time well spent. He congratulated and thanked staff for all the hard work.

Dan Silver asked about the controversy over access to some of the properties. He asked what is the message regarding access to the OCTA properties. Dan Phu said the NCCP has the framework for how to manage the properties, but does not get into

the details of how access will be managed. OCTA has fast-forwarded the Resource Management Plans for review due to access issues. The issue of access needs to be consistent with properties biological resource needs and is being worked out with the wildlife agencies. Dan Silver said it seems like there is room for an evolution in the future. Dan Phu said yes, it can morph over time and we are working it out.

Dan Silver felt that all the NCCP conditions were met.

Melanie Schlotterbeck asked when the implementing agreement would be fully executed. Dan Phu indicated the whole package will go to the OCTA Board on November 28. Upon OCTA Board approval, a Notice of Determination (NOD) in accordance to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will be filed. The filing of the NOD triggers a mandatory 30-day review period. Dan Phu indicated the plan is to have it fully executed during the early part of first quarter in 2017.

Melanie Schlotterbeck said Resource Management Plans are reviewed and updated every 5 years.

Melanie Schlotterbeck said the primary purpose of this program is conservation, but access is a co-benefit.

Melanie Schlotterbeck thanked staff for their hard work and dedication. This has been a big deal for the conservation community. She said this will be a legacy project for OCTA and the environmental community. This moment should be honored.

Public Comments

Jeff Garvin, Hills for Everyone, from Chino Hills said his group is a part of a coalition that supported the renewed Measure M. He honored the significance of an environmental group supporting a transportation agency. In the early 2000's his group collaborated with Caltrans to protect Coal Canyon. In 2005 they worked with OCTA to support Measure M. In 2011, the 296 acre Hiyashi property was acquired by OCTA. Today, the EOC will be considering a conservation plan to permanently protect lands within the mitigation program. This includes a proposed modification to the Chino Hills State Park Restoration Project. Hills for Everyone supports this adjustment. This adjustment is in an area where wildfires often start and the adjustment to the plan will reduce highly flammable non-native vegetation. This will buffer homes and the park from the risk of wildfires. We also plan to support the Resource Management Plan for the Hiyashi property as well. Hills for Everyone supports Alternative 2 in the EIR/EIS. He thanked the OCTA for the opportunity to be partners.

Hellen Higgins, Friends of Coyote Hills, from Fullerton said her organizations supported the renewal of Measure M in 2005. Friends of Coyote Hills supports Alternative 2 in the EIR/EIS. She commended OCTA for the record speed in which the EIR/EIS was written, drafted and finalized. She also commended the US Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Caltrans. OCTA's diligent work with

regional offices and the Army Corps of Engineers has moved along the process. This program has become a model in the state for conservation programs.

Amy Litton, Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks, recounted the process to this point. She quoted the Transportation Investment Plan portion of the Measure M Ordinance as it relates to conservation. On behalf of the entire coalition, she thanked OCTA and the EOC for taking their comments seriously.

Penny Elia, Sierra Club, said the other speakers covered most of what she wanted to say. She said she has had great success working with the OCTA staff. She appreciates the speed in which the process has taken to come to fruition. She thanked OCTA and the EOC for taking care of our lands.

Gloria Sefton, Saddleback Canyons Conservancy, from Trabuco Canyon said her organization also supported Measure M over a decade ago. Her organization has regularly submitted comments on the plans and now offers an endorsement of the plan. She said five of the seven preserves acquired by OCTA as part of the mitigation program are located in the unincorporated portions of Orange County. These lands are unlike any others and are very special. They have additional levels of resources protecting them through the Foothill/Trabuco Plan and the Silverado/Modjeska Plan. Her organization urges compliance and awareness of these plans. OCTA's understanding of the rural communities and the environmental sensitivity is appreciated.

Gloria Sefton said additional conservation funding may be available in the 2018 Park Bond. She said OCTA might be eligible for some of these funds. She thanked the committee for their strong leadership and ongoing public engagement – it has been a great accomplishment.

Michael Wellborn, Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks, said his organization managed the coalition that supported Measure M. In the year 2000 his organization created the Green Vision Map. He said this map documents the protected land in and around Orange County. When the map was created, they never thought it would be used for conservation by an infrastructure agency and certainly did not think OCTA would generate \$243 million for conservation restoration and stewardship purposes. This map was used for the initial call for projects by OCTA. Nearly 1,300 acres have been converted to protected lands due to Measure M funding. Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks supports Alternative 2 as described in the EIR/EIS and commend OCTA and EOC on this conservation plan.

Recommendations

A motion was made by Melanie Schlotterbeck. A committee member seconded the motion and passed unanimously to endorse all three recommendations: Final EIR/EIS, Final NCCP/HCP, and implementing agreement between OCTA, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

5. Harriett Wieder Restoration Project Update

Lesley Hill introduced David Pryor from the Bolsa Chica Conservancy (BCC). David gave a brief update.

6. Chino Hills State Park and North Coal Canyon Restoration Projects Update Lesley Hill gave a brief summary of the Chino Hills State Park and North Coal Canyon Restoration Projects. Lesley then introduced Ken Kietzer from Chino Hills State Park who provided an update on the projects. Ken then asked the committee for their endorsement of the amendment to the scope change on the project.

Melanie Schlotterbeck asked about the number of proposed trails. Ken Kietzer said the State Parks will maintain one access point for the public to access the trails.

Melanie Schlotterbeck asked about access to water in the Telegraph Canyon location. Ken Kietzer said getting water to the location has been difficult and there will be two sites with irrigation systems that will be easy to operate.

Melanie Schlotterbeck said Glider Point sometimes gets burned by illegal fireworks. She said she is glad to hear the area will be restored with cactus to deter trespassers from coming to this point and happy to have it restored.

A motion was made by Melanie Schlotterbeck. A committee member seconded the motion and passed unanimously to endorse the California Department of Parks and Recreation's revised scope of work as described herein for the Chino Hills State Park Restoration Project

7. Trabuco Canyon Company, LLC: Residual Parcel Update

Dan Phu said there is another offer on the table for the Trabuco Canyon Company, LLC Residual Parcel. An EOC meeting is anticipated in November to present the results of the appraisal and due diligence documents for Committee consideration.

Melanie Schlotterbeck asked if the appraisal review will happen before the next EOC meeting. Dan Phu said yes the appraisal review will be done before the next committee meeting.

8. O'Neill Oaks Preserve Hike and Ferber Ranch Preserve Equestrian Ride

Marissa Espino said the O'Neill Oaks Preserve Hike and Ferber Ranch Preserve Equestrian Ride will take place on October 29, weather permitting. She said there will be another hike on November 19 that is family oriented, so younger children will be welcomed.

David Chapel asked how people will know if the event has been cancelled. Marissa Espino said the information will be on the website and she will contact anyone who has RSVP'd. David asked if it is opened to the public. Marissa said yes, but you have to register online to get all the information.

9. Public Comments

Penny Elia, Sierra Club, said she was concerned about a map that was distributed by the City of Laguna Beach to the Coastal Commission and other agency folks. This map (produced by OC Parks) shows a hiking trail that crosses over the OCTA Aliso Canyon property and an adjacent preserved parcel. She spoke to OC Parks about her dismay that the Sierra Club was not consulted. A group scouting out the hike was going through a restoration site and she confronted them. Public access is wonderful, but we need to protect conservation land. She felt obligated to share the information with the EOC. She has invited OCTA staff to attend a meeting to discuss this concern further.

10. Committee Member Reports

11. Next Meeting – TBD

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.