

**San Francisco Bay Trail  
Summer Board Meeting - Draft Minutes  
Lucy Evans Interpretive Center  
Palo Alto Baylands  
June 27, 2002**

**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm.

**Attendance**

Board Members:

Chair: Rick Parmer  
Bill Bliss  
Julie Bondurant  
Mary Burns  
Leo DuBose  
Stana Hearne  
Nadine Hitchcock  
Tom Huening  
Minane Jameson

Lori Johnson  
Joseph LaClair  
Gayle Likens  
Bill Long  
Julia Miller  
David Mitchell  
Don Weden  
Del Woods

Panelists (P) and Guests (G):

Jeff Barbosa, Office of Senator Figueroa (D-Fremont) -G  
Greg Betts, City of Palo Alto - G  
Marge Kolar, United States Fish and Wildlife Service - P  
Ana Ruiz, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District - G  
Mike Sellors, Audubon Society, San Francisco Bay Restoration -P  
Lynne Trulio, Principal Investigator, Wildlife & Public Access Study - G  
Carl Wilcox, California Dept. of Fish and Game - P

Staff

Janet McBride  
Melissa Barry  
Laura Thompson  
David Lipsetz

**Introductions / Agenda**

Introductions were made.

Agenda:

Greg Betts welcomed Board to Palo Alto Baylands Interpretive Center, describing its many trails and the marsh restoration of the Baylands

The agenda and minutes were adopted with no additions and one correction:

- McBride notes correction for agenda of voting for 2 (not 1) new Board Members, Dan Hodapp and Ron Schafer

### Board Announcements

Mitchell

- San Jose adopted general plan amendments that include Bay Trail alignment.

### Staff Announcements

McBride

- Reminded everyone of the nearby bench dedicated in memory of (former Director) Irv Besser.
- Available for signature: a get-well card for Jim McGrath and certificates of thanks to resigning Board Members Carol Nelson and Carol Bach.
- Provided progress report on RDP grant funds; encouraged Board Members to recommend projects for inclusion on lists for future funding.
- Noted that the Wildlife and Public Access study has concluded data gathering, begun analysis, and shared preliminary findings. Bliss raised issue of the need for funding next round of study and preliminary nature of current results.

### **Resolutions**

Hearne moved, Miller seconded approval of Ron Schafer's nomination to the Bay Trail Board of Directors. Unanimously approved.

Miller moved, Bliss seconded approval of Dan Hodapp's nomination to the Bay Trail Board of Directors. Unanimously approved.

### **Panel discussion of Bay Wetland Restoration Process**

Moderator: Rick Parmer (California Department of Fish and Game, Bay Trail Chair)  
Panelists: Lori Johnson (Cargill, Bay Trail Director)  
Marge Kolar (United States Fish and Wildlife Service)  
Joe LaClair (Bay Conservation and Development Commission, Bay Trail Director)  
Mike Sellors (Audubon, San Francisco Bay Restoration)  
Carl Wilcox (California Department of Fish and Game)

Parmer introduces panel and discussion theme, of public access trails role in Bay wetlands restoration projects.

Wilcox discussed Regional Wetlands Goals Project, which articulated specific goals in follow-up to the Comprehensive Conservation Plan of the San Francisco Bay Estuary.

Johnson discussed the past, present and future of Cargill's salt production business in the Bay. She then addressed the current negotiations to sell 16,500 acres of land and/or production rights from Cargill to the public domain. Recognized that Cargill has historically been an obstacle to trail development, and considers the transfer of this land to be a tremendous opportunity for the Bay Trail. Deal thought to be complete by mid-September.

Kolar described the science and process of converting salt ponds to natural habitat, and estimating it would take five years to write restoration plans and much longer for the habitat to be fully restored.

Sellors discussed role of advocacy organizations in the negotiations for acquiring private land, and in the restoration of wetlands. Audubon's three part agenda includes developing the science of restoration, involving the public, and advocating for conservation of sensitive habitats.

LaClair reviewed the regulatory structure for shoreline land use activity, and discussed issues surrounding the design plans for a restoration project and how the work could be funded.

Parmer opened the floor to questions and discussion.

Hitchcock introduced the role of the Coastal Conservancy in the Cargill lands restoration process, and mentioned that there will be a subcommittee on public access as part of process.

Long asked if there is a process underway for defining public access design guidelines that the scientific community can uniformly support.

- LaClair discussed the associated challenges in doing so, and mentions that there is an effort to define guidelines which would govern the decision making process about design for specific location.
- Wilcox responded that there is a call for studying the impact of trails in previously restored areas.

Bondurant asked who, in Cargill's absence, will maintain existing levies.

- Kolar responds that, most likely, few levies will remain.

Miller asked about the timeframe of the Moffett Field site restoration and trail improvements.

- Kolar responded that it would be at least 5 years before the restoration-wide plans are complete, and from that point forward areas will be worked upon on a set priority schedule.
- Hitchcock added that some sites might be targeted for near term access, and that the process of trail development will depend greatly on funding sources.

Miller asked for comments on the balance between wetland restoration and developing a new South Bay ferry terminal.

- Wilcox responded that the likelihood of ferry terminal development is low since it would have a high impact on shoreline locations and would require significant amounts of dredging.

Huening asked if there is a timeline for completing the Bair Island environmental report.

- Kolar responded that a draft is due in August, early winter publication expected.
- Wilcox noted that restoration might require dredging.

Sellors commented that the discussion of a major wetland restoration should not get ahead of itself, as the transfer of land from Cargill has not yet been successfully negotiated. Also introduced Audubon's intention to build a network of nature centers throughout the Bay area for public involvement and education.

- Johnson noted that input at this point in the land transfer negotiation process could be directed to a State Senate Committee just formed on the subject by Senator Sher.

Weden invited panelists to describe the situation 20 years into the future.

- Parmer sees a new era of partnerships between various stakeholders appears to be dawning, and that there is a tremendous need for educating the public.
- Johnson agreed, perceiving the emergence of a new model for various parties working in collaboration for restoration. This is opposed to the previous Bay Area model of contentious infighting and intransigence.
- Kolar responded that a through-trail could be problematic. She suggested a wetland restoration design that instead includes spur trails.
- Sellors envisions the Bay as a model for the world's leaders, where a deliberative process produced a well-restored wetlands area appreciated by a wide variety of participants.
- Johnson sees the formation of cooperative, non-combative partnerships
- LaClair predicts the development of low-impact trailways throughout the natural settings where salt ponds once were, and also emphasizes the positive influences that public involvement and education can have on this process.
- Wilcox mentioned trails as an important component of restoration, and anticipates the dialogue about the Bay's future moving from bitter disputes over land use, against development and for conservation of tiny parcels and scraps of land, to the coordinated planning of large areas where the regional impact can be appropriately considered and all stakeholders be properly accommodated.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.