# LOWER PUTAH CREEK COORDINATING COMMITTEE

**TO:** **Interested Persons**

**FROM:** **Rich Marovich, Streamkeeper (SK)**

**DATE:** **September 12, 2019**

**SUBJECT:** **Agenda for Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee Decision Meeting**
Thursday, September 12 at the Davis Veterans Memorial Club Room, 203 E 14th St, Davis from 3:30 to 5:00 PM

| # | min | Item | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 | **Public Comment:** Comments welcome on matters pertaining to Putah Creek. | | |
| 2 | 5 | **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the August meeting will be reviewed. | | |
| 3 | 10 | **The LPCCC will:** | **Review the Grant/Project Budget** | **Patterned Calendar** |
| | | | **Review Riparian Diversions** | |
| 4 | 10 | **Salmon Attraction Flow:** SK proposes to pull the boards at Los Rios Check Dam on October 29th in part so that some salmon may arrive by the November 2 Winters Salmon Festival. | | |
| 5 | 30 | **Prop 13 Planning Grant:** SK will report on deliverables and Kent Anderson will report on outreach. | | |
| 6 | 10 | **Streamkeeper Report:** SK will report on work for September-October. | | |
| 7 | 10 | **Member Reports:** LPCCC members will have an opportunity to report. | | |
| 8 | 5 | **Correspondence:** LPCCC will discuss any significant correspondence. | | |
| | | **Next Meeting:** The LPCCC will hold a discussion meeting of the Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee on Thursday, October10th at the Monticello Room, Solano Irrigation District, 810 Vaca Valley Parkway, Suite 201,Vacaville. | | |

*810 Vaca Valley Parkway, Suite 203, Vacaville, California 95688 ♦ Phone: (530) 902-1794 ♦ Fax: (707) 451-6099*
*http:// www.watershedportals.org/lpccc*

*The Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee consists of:*
*Cities of Davis, Fairfield, Suisun City, Vacaville, Vallejo and Winters; Counties of Solano and Yolo;*
*Solano and Yolo Riparian Landowners; Maine Prairie Water District; Solano County Water Agency;*
*Solano Irrigation District; Putah Creek Council and University of California, Davis*

LOWER PUTAH CREEK COORDINATING COMMITTEE

**TO:** **Interested Persons**

**FROM:** **Rich Marovich, Streamkeeper (SK)**

**DATE:** **August 8, 2019**

**SUBJECT: Minutes of Thursday, August 8, 2019 Discussion Meeting of the Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee – Solano Irrigation District Monticello Room, 810 Vaca Valley Parkway, Vacaville from 3:30 to 5:00 pm.**

| No. | Time | Item | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 | **Public Comment:** Alan Pryor offered written and oral comments that are detailed in the notes. | |
| 2 | 5 | **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the July meeting were approved. | |
| 3 | 5 | **Compost Spreader:** LPCCC approved purchase of a compost spreader. | |
| 4 | 5 | **Grant Application Updates:** SK reported on funding opportunities. | Patterned Calendar |
| 5 | 10 | **Interagency Updates:** SK reported on interagency actions. | |
| 6 | 30 | **Fish Monitoring Update:** Tim Salamunovich provided an update on aquatic monitoring. | |
| 7 | 10 | **Financial Reserves:** Deferred to a future Vacaville meeting. | |
| 8 | 5 | **Riparian Diversions Report:** Assistant SK provided an update on diversions. | |
| 9 | 5 | **Streamkeeper Report**: SK reported on ongoing projects. | |
| 10 | 10 | **Member Reports:** JP Marie thanked SCWA for support of One Creek Internship. Turid Reid said that Putah Creek Council is ramping up stewardship and education. | |
| 11 | 5 | **Correspondence:** No significant correspondence. | |
| | - | **Next Meeting:** The LPCCC will hold a decision meeting Thursday, September 12th at the Davis Veterans Memorial Game Room (14th and B Streets) from 3:30 to 5:00 PM | |

Attendance: Harold Anderson, Justen Cole, Patrick Huber, Dennis Kilkenny, Thomas Pate, Turid Reid, Felix Riesenberg, John Vickrey, Herb Wimmer (quorum: yes)
Guests: Tim Salamunovich, Vic Claassen, Gavin Poore, Nicolle Herr, Kent Anderson, Chris Lee. Public: Jeff Tenpas, Alan Pryor, Glen Holstein, Alan Pryor
Notes: Hollie Pemberton.



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*http:// www.scwa2com/lpccc*

LPCCC Notes 8.8.19

1. *Public Comments*
    a. *Alan Pryor – Friends of Putah Creek*

*My name is Alan Pryor speaking on behalf of Friends of Putah Creek.*

*The minutes of last month's meeting reflected comments by Rich Marovich that were unproven, misleading, or erroneous. These attempted to characterize all of the work done in the WPCP project as a complete success rather than address what we consider very serious shortcomings in results achieved due to the flaws in the underlying design and implementation of the project.*

*Firstly, Rich showed cherry-picked before and after photos that were misleading in that they showed a very narrow view of the Creek. The majority of the floodplain in phases 1 & 2 are still barren and most of the replantings have failed due to the nature of the imported and compacted fill. If the project replanting were otherwise such a success, how come 30,000 cubic yards of compost and wood chips are now being imported and the LPCCC is buying a tree spader and a compost spreader and a transplanter to try to rejuvenate the floodplain in sections now dominated by cocklebur, mustard, Johnson grass, and Burmuda grass.*

*Rich also noted a lack of meander form and pool-riffle sequence before the project stating they are hallmarks of natural channels and he stated that before the project it was a gravel pit, not a naturally formed channel. I would suggest that the channel imposed on the floodplain by the project is far from natural either as almost all of the pools have now been functionally completely removed along with the refuge those pools provided for native fish and amphibians. Even if the gravel pits pools were not natural to the area, they still served as vital habitat for the entire riparian ecosystem.*

*Rich also noted the green stagnant water and surface area exposed to solar radiation stating this created a warming basin that was bad for water quality bad and bad for native fish. Unfortunately, no temperature data was provided to support this hypothesis. I actually believe the disconnection from the groundwater mound caused by the compacted fill would contribute more to warming of the pool water than anything else and there is a fair amount of literature to support that hypothesis. There is also no before and after water quality analyses to support Rich's statements and the objective fish counts taken by Normandeau through 2016 actually show a dramatic drop in native fish populations in the WPCP project after the project was completed in 2011.*

*Rich also showed a diagram showing that almost all of the fill used in the floodplain was from cutting into the high banks. That is not true as almost the entire floodplain was raised from 2 – 10 feet higher due to the importation of the 70,000 cubic yards of fill in phases 1 and 2.*

*Rich also stated the placement of the fill did not disturb the original floor of the channel which remains porous and able to transmit groundwater. I do not believe that is a true statement because we know the steam bed itself was raised several feet in most sections of the Creek to make the Creek more shallow.*

*He also stated that the groundwater mound underneath the flow channel was continuous with the flow channel as well as stating that the groundwater drops off rapidly from the edge of the flow channel due to gravity. However, it is completely speculative that the creek is still connected to groundwater. It is probably true that there is a diminishing mound of water beneath the channel but this is because the floodplain was bulldozed and filled and compacted which completely destroyed the stratified layers of soil and cobble that previously underlay the Creek and allowed lateral migration through the floodplain. This is what is preventing trees further from the creek from thriving as they would in a healthy riparian floodplain where you have such extensive lateral migration of water.*

*This is also why the depth of groundwater is now 15 feet instead of much closer to the surface and why almost all cottonwood replants have failed or are stunted. According to the literature, cottonwoods planted in a healthy riparian environment should grow between 3 and 6 feet per year and they certainly should not need a hole punched into the ground with a tree spade and filled with organic compost in order to even survive.*

*Rich noted there was no change in the texture of the soil below the fill zone which may be true but is not proven. The bigger problem, however, is the 15 ft of compacted, heavy clayey fill <u>above</u> the groundwater which no longer has stratified layers allowing lateral mobility of water or upward movement by osmosis. This hardened, compacted fill zone is functionally now a dead zone.*

*Rich also answered a question inquiring if salmon spawn in the creek after project? He replied, " Yes, and there was no spawning before this project" implying that it was the rechannelization that was responsible for the appearance of spawning salmon. Well, we all know that the primary reason salmon have returned to the Creek was because of the timing of the attracting fall water releases and opening of the toe-drain. With these flows, the salmon would have appeared with or without the Putah Creek project. And I suggest there were plenty of opportunities to create spawning habitat just by adding cobble to the many riffles already in the Creek without doing a complete rechannelization and bulldozing of the the entire floodplain.*

*We intend to release a report soon that quantitatively addresses many of these problems and what we feel are the project's major design and implementation shortcomings. Thank you.*

2. Approval of Minutes
    a. Minutes approved.
3. Compost Spreader: SK proposed purchase of a used compost spreader

a. We need this to amend soil with organic matter
b. Improve soil as much as we can
c. Small plugs are cheaper to produce but require more soil preparation
d. Higher amount of plug plants for same cost competes more effectively with weeds
e. 8 feet long
f. Motion carries

4. Grant Application Updates: SK will report on funding opportunities
    a. Prop 68 – IDR Management Plan
        i. Requested by DFW
        ii. Funding available for planning through DGW prop 69 program
        iii. $200,000 limit
        iv. Possible trails grant reciprocal match
    b. Wildlife conservation Board
        i. $2 M concept proposal aiming for February 2020 WCD Meeting
            1. Giovannoni (Dry creek confluence)
            2. Nishikawa (upstream of Pederick Road)
            3. Rock vanes at the mouth of tributaries especially
                a. Pleasants Creek
                b. Thompson Canyon
                c. Cold Canyon
        - Whats the relationship to the Prop 1 project? – direct link
        - When are we going to see the Prop 1 results? – public meetings in September, Prop 1 grant ends in December, asking for an extension to March
    c. SWRCB cleanup and Abatement Program
        i. Funding request per hazmat contractor bid
            - Why is there no dollar amounts for this – Tuesday they will be coming out and they will do an assessment, they have to sample the fluids in the tank before they can move it, they will then give us an estimate, the state has an abatement fund, SK is starting a proposal
5. Interagency Updates: SK reported on interagency actions
    a. Wildlife Conservation Board
    b. Putah Creek Trout
    c. Trout Unlimited
    d. League of CA cities
    e. SC Hazardous Materials
    f. State Water Resource Control Board --- cleanup and abatement
6. Fish Monitoring Updates: Tim Salamunovich filled in for Ken Davis and provided an update on aquatic monitoring

a. Tim Salamunovich is the speaker
b. The October 2018 fish survey represents the latest in a long-term monitoring effort that have documented the benefits of the Putah Creek Accord and other restoration efforts
c. We currently survey nine sites located on the 25-mile stretch
d. Six of the nine sites currently surveyed have not been surveyed since 1991
e. Three additional sites were first surveyed in the summer of 2001, both summer and fall (1993-2000) then only the fall 2001-2018
f. 24 years of surveys (1993 – 2018) conditions for native fish in 13 miles of PC between PDD and Pederick Road have improved since the May 2000 accord and the live stream flows as measured at I-80 with high reduction in exotics occurring between 1993 and now
g. Temperature monitoring indicates suitable temp for year-round resident of steelhead and resident trout extend to I-505 and probably beyond toward Stevenson area. We now find juvenile trout as far as Russel Ranch
h. No snorkel surveys in 2017 and 2019 as these were wet years when Lake Berryessa spilled
i. Noted channel and substrate changes during our January and late May 2019 snorkel surveys
j. Next fish monitoring schedule for mid-October 2019 and hope to continue winter/spring juvenile Chinook

7. Financial Reserves: Marcie Fehrenkamp will report on LPCCC financial reserves
    a. Reports not ready, report will be ready for a future meeting at SID
8. Riparian Diversions Report: Assistant SK provided an update on diversions
    a. Uneventful, not complaining
    b. Throughout irrigation did not need to release more water
    c. Discharge in LPC
    d. Gaining reach is from groundwater upwelling
    e. Is everybody still reporting all their diversion – Mark sent out a letter and there was some improvement, but nothing above I-80, Mark thinks there is no active diversion
9. Streamkeeper Report: SK reported on ongoing projects
    *a. Public Comment: Jeff TenPas*
        *i. The following report describes current conditions and LPCCC activities in Winters Putah Creek Nature Park. It is a report on the gross instability, erosion, and revegetation failures in both the old (2011) and new (2018) work areas. The work areas arranged in order from the Winters Car Bridge are in sequence – Phase 1, Phase 3, Phase 2, and NAWCA3 – which reaches the I505 bridge.*

ii. *The conditions as of August 8, 2019 and the recent activities of the LPCCC are:*

iii. *<u>Phase 1 (2011)</u> – The road in Phase 1 was eroded heavily in the flood flows of this spring. The LPCCC has used heavy equipment and fill to treat the entire length of road. This is the second time in two years where the road required major fill and regrading. The mature cottonwood trees that remained after the Phase 1 work range in condition from dead, dying, and poor. Banks were significantly eroded in the high flows with large scallops eroded out, trees (mostly alder) that were undercut and fell, and widening of the stream.*

iv. *<u>Phase 3 (2018)</u> – Phase 3 was heavily eroded in the high flows of spring 2019. The floods eroded the road up to 3 feet deep and 10 feet wide. The flows cut a new overflow channel three feet deep. The newly constructed channel banks were heavily eroded so that boulders that had protected banks now project five feet into the stream. The floodplains are heavily infested with weeds, especially cockle bur. The cockle bur must have been a recently sprayed with herbicide, but no warning signs inform the public of herbicide hazard. Let us hope it was not Roundup (glyphosate, a carcinogen).*

v. *Residual mature trees on the north floodplain are stressed and some dead or dying. The LPCCC is currently watering this area and the trees, presumably in hopes of saving them.*

vi. *On the south bank, the LPCCC has planted new trees (29 at last count) on the floodplain in the past several months. These small 4 foot trees are showing signs of severe stress, not surprising given the season of planting. The trees are being planted with a very large tree spade on a very large wheeled loader with very high ground pressure and will induce more compaction.*

vii. *<u>Phase 2 (2011)</u> – The road in Phase 2 was heavily eroded in the spring floods and LPCCC has filled and regraded it. Some of the fill was cut from the high banks to the south side and decreases the stability of the slopes. Plantings are going on where numerous previous plantings have failed. The north bank remains a weedy unrestored site. Cockle bur, mustard, Bermuda grass, johnsongrass and othe invasive grasses occupy much of the site. The few remaining cottonwoods are in decline, several smaller have died, and larger ones to the west end have branch die back and leaf drop.*

viii. *<u>NAWCA3 (2018)</u> – This 2018 project area was severely eroded and altered by 2019 spring flows and the power of fluvial geomorphology. The water reworked the constructed floodplain, washed the fines from the floodplain surface until it was gravel paved, washed the pedestals from under trees left on pedestals during construction, and obliterated a side channel. The LPCCC has come in with a bulldozer and undone the fluvial geomorphology with a repeat of diesel geomorphology to force the stream into a designed path. Time and water will determine. Several acres are bare and unvegetated and will need to be vegetated before the winter.*

ix. *My concern and what should be the LPCCC's concern is this – this $6 million dollar project has failed in eight years of attempts to revegetate what was at the start a healthy mature floodplain forest. The failures have not been examined, or lessons learned, and applied. Now there are proposed plans to do more of the same on the Nishikawa and Giovannoni sites. Before going on to do more extreme stream alteration projects it is time for examination of the Winters Park project work and the results. Before more heavy diesel geomorphology, before more clearing of healthy vegetation, before more high cost work that leads to weeds not forest. [<u>End of Public Comment</u>]*

b. SK Report
   i. Phase 3 – Winters Putah Creek Park and NAWCA 3: planting continues at Winter Putah Creek Park and NAWCA3. Eucalyptus removal has begun east of Highway 505 on county property
   ii. Putah Diversion Dam to Winters: irrigating field nurseries
   iii. Inter-Dam Reach (September)
      1. Bobcat ranch: erosion control projects
      2. Pleasants Creek: one addition erosion control sites on Pleasant's Creek
      3. Fishing Accesses: weed control
   iv. Emergent Issues: on a routine canoe survey, our field staff discovered what appears to be 10k gallon fuel tank (addressed earlier)
   v. *Public Comment (through the Chair): Maura Metz: the tank has been seen upstream for many years.*

10. Member Reports: LPCCC members will have an opportunity to report
    a. Turid – I think we are ramping stewardship and education
    b. JP – UC Davis thanks SCWA for the opportunity to work with interns on Putah Creek, next week is the last week, it has been amazing, thank you
11. Correspondence:
    a. No new correspondence
12. Next meeting: The LPCCC will hold a decision meeting Thursday, September 12th at the Davis Veterans Memorial Game Room (14th and B street) from 3:30 to 5:00 PM

L O W E R  P U T A H  C R E E K  C O O R D I N A T I N G  C O M M I T T E E

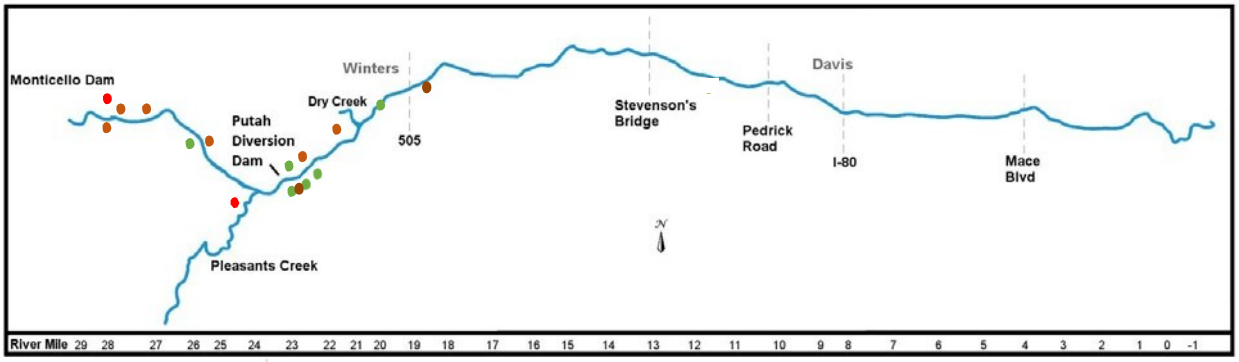
**TO:** **Interested Persons**

**FROM:** **Rich Marovich, Streamkeeper**

**DATE:** **September 5, 2019**

**SUBJECT:** **STREAMKEEPER REPORT**

**Current Field Work (September - October):**




**Legend**

- Upland erosion control projects
- Trails and weed control
- Planting/irrigating native vegetation

**Phase 3 – Winters Putah Creek Park and NAWCA 3:** Planting continues at Winters Putah Creek Park and NAWCA3.

**Putah Diversion Dam to Winters:** Irrigating field nurseries.

**Interdam Reach**
**Bobcat Ranch:** Erosion control projects.
**Pleasants Creek:** One additional erosion control site on Pleasants Creek.
**Fishing Accesses:** Weed control

**Emergent Issues:** SK applied for emergency funding from the Water Board to remove the 8,000 gallon fuel tank before it floats downstream in the next high flow event. Sampling by RAMCON revealed no hydrocarbons or other priority contaminants.

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