



Staff Report

1. Introductions and Updates
2. Public Comment
3. **Presentation:** Ethan Bell, Stillwater Sciences

Ethan will be presenting a summary of results from the 2014 Instream Flow study conducted for the County-wide Watershed Management Planning effort. The effort estimated the amount of water needed to protect aquatic life, known as environmental water demand (EWD), for each season and subwatershed. The study also predicted the low spring and summer flows required to support steelhead in SLO County creeks. The estimates were developed to ensure the survival of fish and do not necessarily equal “enough” water for healthy populations to thrive. Preliminary results suggest that in the spring, existing flows exceed EWD levels at most locations and during the summer existing flows are less than EWD levels at most locations.

4. Agenda Revisions
5. **ACTION:** Consider Approval of August 4, 2016 IC minutes
6. **ACTION:** Recommendation on Community Grant Application

Project: Of Marshes and Morros Educational Film

Applicant: Simo Nylander

Request: \$5,000

Matching Funds: \$3,000 awarded from PG&E, \$5,000 potential from Kickstarter, \$3,000 from other sources

Total Budget: \$16,000

Summary: This request will fund a short documentary video and audio podcast that focus on past conservation efforts for the Morro Bay estuary, and the need to continue that work today. Through interviews with experts, community members, and others, the film and podcast will identify the threats facing the estuary and efforts to address them. The film will be entered into the San Luis Obispo Film Festival, made available to classroom teachers, and posted online.

Recommendations: The E&O Working Group reviewed the grant application and recommended approval for the full amount requested. They had some questions and suggestions regarding the grant. They wondered if the timeline was realistic, or if the film would need to be entered into the film festival for 2018 rather than this year. They wanted to include additional distribution efforts to schools, including reaching out to teachers through email and, perhaps, by attending teacher trainings. The Estuary Program has reached out to the applicant for clarification on these questions.

7. **DISCUSSION:** Review Restoration Fund Five-Year Plan: 2013 to 2017

In 2012, the Estuary Program developed a five-year plan, approved by the Implementation and Executive Committees, for spending Restoration Fund monies. We are nearing the end of our five-year plan. We are presenting an overview of progress under the current plan. In our February meeting, we will present a proposal for the 2017 to 2021 plan.

8. DISCUSSION: Presentation of EPA Semiannual Report

Twice a year, the Estuary Program submits a Semiannual Report to EPA, which provides the program status on the budgets and tasks laid out in our Workplan. The latest Semiannual Report contains a summary for the second half of FY16, from April 1 to September 30, 2016. As of September 2016, 88% of the 320 funds from the grant that began in FY12 have been spent. This grant has been extended until April 28, 2017. The Estuary Program has met 100% of its match requirement.

9. DISCUSSION: Update on State of the Bay report and events

The Estuary Program staff are putting the finishing touches on the 2017 State of the Bay Report, which presents answers to nine questions regarding the health of the bay and watershed. The report will be printed this fall and released early next year.

Planning is underway for the triennial State of the Bay events, which will occur primarily in April of next year. Potential events include:

- A presentation of environmental report card results accompanied by launch of an estuary-themed beer brewed by Libertine, on April 1, at their Morro Bay location.
- Art show and open house in partnership with the Gallery at Marina Square on April 14.
- Saturday Scientist presentation on macroinvertebrates in conjunction with the Morro Bay Natural History Museum on April 15.
- Presentation of environmental report card results on eelgrass, sediment, and climate change as part of the Science After Dark series, in SLO on April 18.
- Presentation of environmental report card results on birds, steelhead, and habitat protection indicators from the environmental report card, date and location TBD.
- Poetry contest.
- DogFest.
- Earth Day paddle event, which is a day to get people out on the water.
- A bay-friendly gardening event in partnership with SLO Botanical Gardens on April 8.

10. Adjourn to next meeting of February 2, 2017 at 12:00 pm at Windows on the Water.

Attachments:

1. August IC meeting minutes
2. Community Grant Application
3. Summary of Restoration Fund Five-Year Plan: 2013 to 2017
4. EPA Semiannual Report