

NBWA
Watershed Council Meeting Summary
January 29, 2015 – 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

I. Introductions – Introductions began at 3:08 p.m. and Harry Seraydarian, NBWA Executive Director, reviewed the agenda. There were no announcements.

II. Our Coast Our Future Update – Sam Veloz, Point Blue, provided a PowerPoint and began with a National Weather Service example to illustrate the difference in detail for the lay person and a professional using the same website. He shifted to Our Coast Our Future – (OCOF) – <http://data.prbo.org/apps/ocof/> and explained the effort to develop the website was a collaborative process with Point Blue, USGS and NOAA over 3-4 years that took a similar approach. Sam highlighted the team leaders on the OCOF project and then explained how to create an account online and also highlighted some of the Frequently Asked Questions. He also noted “Known Issues” for models identified on the website and mentioned one issue with LIDAR overestimating elevation due to vegetation which leads to underestimating flood potential. Sam then briefly described the tutorials and interactive help popups included on the website and moved to a flood map of the entire Bay Area since that is what most people are interested in. He explained how a user could pick a sea level rise scenario and then add different storm events and even a king tide and view the results. Sam also noted that reports could be generated for different locations and scenarios. He described additional features including wave height, current velocity and flood duration. Sam then used the Bay Bridge as an example and illustrated different scenario combinations including king tides. Sam then went online and demonstrated the use of the site for several locations: Novato Sanitary District, Mill Valley, Sausalito and all of the North Bay. Participants had several questions. What is going on with the Highway 37 study which shows no trends for 1970-1990? (Curve will go up in later part of this century.) Will fluctuations be greater? (Not clear – some uncertainty.) What are plans for updates? (Point Blue hosts the OCOF tool and will keep updated; SCC interested in expanding geographically.) What would be the cost estimate to expand to the rest of Sonoma County? (No estimate available at this time.)

III. Multiple Benefits of Conservation: Ecosystem Services – Karen Gaffney provided a PowerPoint entitled “Enhancing Investment in Natural Capital: Working Lands and Natural Areas.” She began with some facts about the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District and then described the regional Healthy Lands Healthy Economies efforts that include Sonoma, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara Counties. Karen described the goal to increase the scope and scale of conservation and noted the use of 30 local case studies to achieve outcomes for working lands, ecosystems and communities. She summarized the policy landscape by noting recent federal, state and local initiatives related to climate change and conservation. Karen described “Screening Level Reports” being created for each county and provided handouts of the first Santa Clara report: “Healthy Lands & Healthy Economies: Nature’s Value in Santa Clara County” (Earth Economics) which was used in 2014 to support Measure Q. She then presented a summary chart showing acres in conservation and the present value of ecosystem benefits for each county. Karen presented case studies in Sonoma County that will include flooding, riparian corridors, agriculture viability, etc. and highlighted examples for “endangered dairies” and “endangered fish.” She presented a map showing development risk for agricultural lands in the “dairy belt” and then noted the benefits of agricultural conservation easements and artisanal cheese investments. Karen also noted the benefits of land conservation for watershed protection using Lake Sonoma as an example where 20,000 acres of easement help protect the water supply. They are also looking at carbon sequestration, groundwater recharge and habitat linkage. Karen then presented a Riparian Corridor case study and certain questions that will be addressed such as the benefits of functional width versus arbitrary buffers. Karen summarized the implications for the studies regarding the multiple benefits of conservation and ended by noting the major funders and partners. Participants had several questions. Does the table showing county present values of benefits really mean to show natural capital depreciating? (Convention of economists – needs to be clarified by adding a column showing increase.) How do you monetize biodiversity? (Willingness to pay.) Are regulatory agencies looking at data? (County Zoning Agency involved and RWQCB.) Are there any case studies on forests and fires? (No, but Earth Economics completed a Rim Fire Analysis.) Is there a schedule for Sonoma? (Draft report in a month or two; in April will have a mini-conference on some case studies.)

IV. Wrap Up – Next Meeting – Spring 2015 – Possible topics: Groundwater, Drought, Fire and Water Supply
Note! Joint Technical Committee recommends a workshop on Prop 84 and Prop 1 funding opportunities.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Participants:

Chris Choo – Marin County Public Works
Caitlin Cornwall – Sonoma Ecology Center
Karen Gaffney – Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation
& Open Space District
Sarah Phillips – Marin Resource Conservation District
Richard Plant – Tomales Bay, Marin Resource
Conservation District

Elizabeth Preim-Rohtla – NBWA
Laurette Rogers – Point Blue Conservation Science
Tito Sasaki – North Bay Agricultural Alliance
Harry Seraydarian – NBWA
Susan Stompe – Marin Conservation League
Sam Veloz – Speaker, Spatial Ecologist, Point Blue