

North Bay Watershed Association

Summary of the meeting of the North Bay Watershed Association (NBWA) Board of Directors

Date: Friday, February 3, 2017 – 9:30 a.m.

Location: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Ave, Novato CA, 94945

Directors Present Included:

Board Member	Organization	Board Member	Organization
Pam Drew	City of Novato	Ryan Gregory	Napa Sanitation District
Mike Healy	City of Petaluma	Jack Baker	North Marin Water District
Paul Jensen	City of San Rafael	Brant Miller	Novato Sanitary District
Madolyn Agrimonti	City of Sonoma & Sonoma Valley County Sanitary District	Pamela Meigs	Ross Valley Sanitary District
Damon Connolly	County of Marin	Grant Davis	Sonoma County Water Agency
Jack Gibson	Marin Municipal Water District		

Directors present represented 12 of the 18 agencies signatory to the Association MOU.

Board Actions:

1. Call to Order – Jack Baker, Chair, calls the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.
2. Public Comment – No public comments were raised.
3. Approval of the Agenda – The agenda was unanimously approved.
4. Approval of Previous Minutes – The minutes from the previous NBWA Board Meeting were approved with one abstention.
5. Treasurer’s Report – Judy Kelly, NBWA Executive Director, reported that one member agency has outstanding dues.
6. Director’s Report – Judy Kelly presented the Director’s Report. Of note, Judy Kelly has been appointed to the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority’s Advisory Committee (along with Grant Davis of SCWA and Roger Leventhal of Marin County). Secondly, although the EPA’s Water Quality Improvement Fund has been frozen, the EPA plans to continue work on the 2017 RFP and aims to conclude the selection process this summer, contingent on the funding freeze being lifted.
7. Groundwater Management and SGMA in the North Bay - Marcus Trotta, Principle Hydrogeologist at the Sonoma County Water Agency, discussed groundwater issues in the North Bay, and particularly the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) in Sonoma County. Marcus provided a brief overview of the topic by broadly defining groundwater and describing how it moves through the water cycle through evaporation, transpiration, infiltration, and runoff. Marcus discussed the various technical studies, primarily conducted by USGS, to assess local groundwater conditions in the Santa Rosa Plain, Sonoma Valley, and Petaluma Valley. Voluntary groundwater management programs have been present in all three basins which involve groundwater-level and streamflow monitoring, involvement of community stakeholders, monitoring well construction, and groundwater model development. Marcus specifically identified groundwater salinity as a significant local groundwater concern. Q: How much of a problem is salinity in groundwater in Sonoma Valley? A: In deeper aquifers most salinity is coming from a combination of geothermal sources and old marine water, but shallow aquifers are more susceptible to brackish salt water intrusion. More clarification and monitoring is needed to quantify the severity of the problem. Recommended groundwater management strategies include conservation, water reuse, groundwater banking, and using stormwater to recharge aquifers.
In Sonoma County, three basins are categorized as medium priority basins and therefore must comply with SGMA. Those basins are the Santa Rosa Plain, Petaluma Valley, and Sonoma Valley. There are no basins in Marin that are required to comply with SGMA. SGMA is comprised of three components, the first of which requires each basin to develop a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) to regulate groundwater. Basins are granted significant autonomy in the creation of this agency, but if local agencies fail to form their own regulatory agency by June 30th,

2017, then the Regional Water Quality Control Board will be entitled to relate local groundwater basins. The current goal in Sonoma County is to develop one GSA for each basin. Q: How will SGMA regulate private wells? A: This is one of the challenges and while SGMA would allow for metering, the proposed solutions involve estimating private rural residential and agricultural water use by measuring crop types and irrigated turf area, etc. The next steps in the implementation of SGMA involve the continued pursuit of monitoring, and integrating technical information into Groundwater Sustainability Plans. For more information go to sonomacountywater.org/groundwater/.

8. Climate Ready North Bay - Phase II – Caitlin Cornwall, of the Sonoma Ecology Center, provided the Board with an update on the NBWA-funded Climate Ready North Bay – Phase II project, which sought to identify climate data and planning tools available for resource managers in the North Bay and create a centralized online resource connecting people with the most current, actionable, and customizable climate data tools. Two surveys of NBWA members returned the results that there is significant interest in to collection of climate adaptation tools tailored for specific sectors or audiences (i.e. roads, wastewater, city planners, etc.). For more information on Climate Ready North Bay – Phase II please visit nbwatershed.org/climate-ready-north-bay/.
9. Climate Adaptation – Sonoma County Water Agency – Laura Harnish (CH2M) described the work the Sonoma County Water Agency is initiating to develop a Climate Adaptation Plan. As impacts of changing climate have already been felt in the North Bay, the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) has invested in improved understanding of climate science and threats and initiated the evaluation of climate-related vulnerabilities and the resulting risks to its water supply, sanitation, and flood control infrastructure and operations to identify the highest priority adaptation actions. CH2M has been contracted to develop this Adaptation Plan. Regional climate science and adaptation tools will be utilized to provide preliminary understanding of local climate threats. Q: Does this project use any databases identified by Climate Ready North Bay (see above)? A: Yes, for example using some downscaled models from USGS and Scripps. Although no conclusions have been reached at this point in the project process, this plan will aim to identify long-range agency strategies and policies, assist in the prioritization of projects, identify funding sources, provide measureable indices of climate change, provide metrics for monitoring climate adaptation measures, and provide a framework for ongoing regional projects. Q: How might this work be applicable to other member agencies in the NBWA? A: A goal of this study is to produce data and conclusions that can be the basis for future regional specific climate adaptation work. The project is expected to be complete in 2018. More information can be found at sonomacountywater.org/climate/.
10. Items of Interest - Judy Kelly provided the NBWA Board with the opportunity to engage in pending discussions on the health of San Francisco Bay by providing comments which underscore the importance of freshwater flows to the health of San Francisco Bay. She presented a draft letter addressed to the State Water Resources Control Board [SWRCB] asserting the need for additional freshwater flows which would become part of the comment process to the SWRCB on pending amendments to the water quality plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. The Board was asked to review the draft and make any comments to Judy prior to February 15, 2017. A Board discussion about this proposed letter will be held at the March NBWA Board Meeting.
11. Items for next agenda
 - Opportunity to state support for healthy Bay freshwater flows in SWRCB process.
 - Roger Leventhal (Marin County) will give a final report on the Bothin Marsh NBWA funded project.
 - Preliminary discussion on the 2018 conference.

Next Meeting Information: March 3rd, 2017 – Marin Community Foundation, 5 Hamilton Landing, Suite 200, Novato, CA 94949

SUBMITTED BY:
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