

# Bay Area Ecosystems Climate Change Consortium

Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

11th floor conference room, California State Coastal Conservancy  
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor, Oakland, California 94610

## Meeting Summary

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### Attendees:

Ellie Cohen, PRBO Conservation Science	Jamie Kooser, SF Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
Kelley Higgason, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary	Claudia Cox, National Weather Service (via teleconference)
Maria Brown, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary	Patrick Barnard, US Geological Survey (via teleconference)
Matt Gerhart, CA State Coastal Conservancy	Daphne Hatch, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (via teleconference)
Nadine Hitchcock, CA State Coastal Conservancy	Erin Chappell, Department of Water Resources (via teleconference)
Mendel Stewart, US Fish and Wildlife Service	Nicole Heller, Climate Central
Tom Suchanek, US Geological Survey (via teleconference)	Deanne DiPietro, Sonoma Ecology Center
Wendy Goodfriend, Bay Conservation and Development Commission	Kim Magraw, Office of Policy Analysis, Department of Interior
Christina Sloop, SF Bay Joint Venture	Ariel Okamoto, Bay Area Writer
Becky Smyth, National Coastal Services Center	
Abe Doherty, Ocean Protection Council	
Heather Kerkering, Central/Northern California Ocean Observing System	

### Action Item Summary:

- Participating organizations will provide names and contact info for Communications Committee members to Andy by April 18.
- Claudia to hold a call or meeting of Communications Subcommittee by Apr. 30
- Andy to work with BAECCC Committees to provide recommendations about how BAECCC can make sure that “tools” such as the Conservation Lands Network explorer tool are used broadly with proper understanding of their correct application and technical limitations
- Andy and Claudia to work with Communications Committee to prepare as a PDF a one-page summary of BAECCC for use on the website, with possible alterations for specific audiences
- Maria, Andy, and Heather to follow up on interest of Congressional delegation, consider an informational briefing and supporting a hearing by Speier on SLR in the Bay
- Kelley will advise group when she determines the status of the funding situation for Benet Duncan, the PACE fellow.
- Andy, working with Ellie, will solicit ideas for presenters on the concept of scenario-based planning for the next BAECCC meeting. Wendy knows an individual who she will suggest. It may make sense to have a presentation of something more specific, rather than
- Those with ideas for possible presentations for a BAECCC-sponsored session for at the State of the Estuary Conferences should send their ideas to Andy

- Andy to send a request for people to send their suggested criteria of what constitutes a BAECCC project
- Andy will suggest dates for the next BAECCC meeting(s) using an on-line poll
- Andy will develop a draft policy regarding letters of support for consideration by the Steering Committee
- Ellie will distribute Nat Seavy piece regarding “tools and managers”
- Mendel, Nicole, and Matt will provide PPT files to Andy for distribution
- Mendel will advise regarding when funding announcements are made for I&M projects; Tom will do the same for the LCC announcements.
- Andy- follow up with Christina to explore the SFBJV Monitoring Committee serving as a BAECCC working group and how would work

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1. **Introductions**
  2. **Review agenda** (no changes were suggested)
  3. **NOAA Staff for BAECCC Communications Program**

The services of Claudia Cox of the National Weather Service have been made available to BAECCC through the NOAA Leadership Competencies Development Program. Claudia, who has been working for the National Weather Service for 20 years, will be housed at the offices of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary for most of the next three months. Maria reviewed Claudia’s scope of work, which will focus mainly on development of the BAECCC Communications Plan, and agreed to distribute it to the BAECCC list. Claudia will develop and distribute a survey (coordinated with the SeaGrant adaptation needs survey) to BAECCC participants that will help refine her scope, and will work closely with Andy to develop the plan. It is expected she will assist with developing concepts for BAECCC’s website, help with a “one-pager” that describes BAECCC, and assist BAECCC with developing unique and constructive messages for the public. She will also convene the first meeting of the BAECCC Communications and Outreach Committee to review the draft plan. The following individuals were identified as potential committee members: Doug Cordell (USFWS), Melissa Pitkin (PRBO), Dick Wayman (Conservancy), Sarah Polgar (BCDC), Caroline Warner (SF Bay Joint Venture). It was agreed that these members would be verified by April 18<sup>th</sup>, and that the Subcommittee would try to meet by April 30<sup>th</sup>.

- **Participating organizations will provide names and contact info for Communications Committee members to Andy by April 18.**
- **Claudia to hold a call or meeting of Communications Subcommittee by Apr. 30**

#### **Information Items**

4. Program updates
  - a. Upland Habitat Goals Project – (M. Gerhart)

Matt Gerhart updated the group regarding the Upland Habitat Goals project, which has recently finished its initial phase after five years of work toward the goal of preserving biodiversity for future generations in the upland portions of the nine-county Bay watershed. He briefly reviewed the process and methods that have led to the creation of a “conservation lands network” that identifies conservation investment priorities for land preservation, with a focus on non-urban

lands that have not yet been significantly fragmented. The project has produced a [web-based tool](#) that can develop reports containing key conservation-related information for user-defined parcels, allowing interested individuals to identify lands considered essential for protection of biodiversity in the Bay Area. The next steps for the project, development of which has been coordinated by the [Bay Area Open Space Council](#), is to add climate-related information to the land parcel reports and to refine the outputs to provide more data interpretation for users.

During the discussion several members of the group noted the importance of providing interpretive guidance so that the products of the tool are applied properly, and potential users of the data understand how it can be useful and also its limitations (e.g., when using this tool what questions are actually being answered?). There is a need to gather meta-data regarding available web-based tools, help the community avoid duplication of effort, and possibly understand how different available tools might link to each other (although this may be a challenge given the number of tools being created and their complexity). It was suggested that the BAECCC subcommittees consider these issues as part of their deliberations, possibly with the assistance of Tom Rosum at the NOAA Coastal Services Center, who has been evaluating ecosystem-based management tools with funding from the Packard Foundation (Grant Ballard of PRBO may also be of assistance).

- **Andy to work with BAECCC Committees to provide recommendations about how BAECCC can make sure that “tools” such as the Conservation Lands Network explorer tool are used broadly with proper understanding of their correct application and technical limitations**

b. Federal agencies subcommittee (M. Brown)

Maria Brown reported on the work of BAECCC’s Federal Agencies Subcommittee. The agencies have developed a Letter of Intent that will facilitate collaboration by making it easier for the agencies to share resources, apply jointly for funding, and elevate the exposure of work products in Washington DC. Maria noted that there is a lot of interest in BAECCC among the Congressional Delegation (Speier, Eshoo, and Woolsey among others) and senior staff in NOAA (David Kennedy, head of National Ocean Service), as was also noted by Heather Kerkering of CeNCOOS (It is expected that there will be similar interest from senior national staff at the Department of the Interior). The multi-jurisdictional, interdisciplinary, and regional approach of BAECCC to the key issue of climate change is particularly attractive, and Maria noted the importance of quickly refining our “one-pager” to deliver to these interested parties, and also available for download from our website. In particular, Congresswoman Speier is interested in holding an informational hearing in the Bay Area on sea level rise when some of the initial products from Our Coast Our Future (OCOF) are available (probably late fall 2011).

Andy noted that a related product would be a short presentation (5-10 minutes) that emphasizes the importance of BAECCC and its objectives, which could also be turned into a video for the website. In an effort to reach out to legislative staff it was suggested that they could attend the OCOF stakeholder workshops this summer, although Kelley noted this could be a distraction from OCOF goals. Instead, a better strategy may be to conduct a results-oriented briefing for legislative staff as soon as the Steering Committee feels it is appropriate.

- **Andy and Claudia to work with Communications Committee to prepare as a PDF a one-page summary of BAECCC for use on the website, with possible alterations for specific audiences**
- **Maria, Andy, and Heather to follow up on interest of Congressional delegation, consider an informational briefing and supporting a hearing by Speier on SLR in the Bay**

**c. Our Coast Our Future (K. Higgason)**

Kelley Higgason provided an update on the [Our Coast Our Future](#) (OCOF) project, a joint effort among the GOF Sanctuary, PRBO, USGS, and the National Park Service (NPS). Major funding has come from NOAA, with NPS also contributing funds. OCOF will be preparing a digital elevation model (2 M resolution) for the coast from Bodega Head to Half Moon Bay, with higher resolution analyses nested in the larger project for targeted management areas such as Bolinas Lagoon. USGS is leading an analysis of sea level rise on 10-year intervals for 100 years, including projection of wave heights and storm surge, to allow assessment of potential impacts on vulnerable infrastructure and natural resources. Results for the outer coast should be available in the fall of 2011. PRBO is taking the lead on developing interactive maps of the results, including web-based assessment tools, while GOF is providing overall project management and conducting stakeholder outreach and engagement. Kelley noted that two stakeholder workshops are planned (likely in August) to clarify stakeholder needs and interests, which will then be used to guide product development and roll out. The project is presently funded through the fall of 2012, but it is hoped that the effort can be supported into the future to further refine the outputs as stakeholders clarify their information needs.

**d. SFBNERR Sea Level Rise proposal**

The project group is also working to bring the SLR projections into San Francisco Bay with a proposal to the San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (SFBNERR). Patrick noted that the proposed work would include the South Bay and up to the Delta, where they would interface with the [CASCaDE](#) (Computational Assessments of Scenarios of Change for the Delta Ecosystem) project. CASCaDE PI Noah Knowles would also be a co-PI on the SF Bay SLR project if funded. A very extensive pre-proposal has been submitted, a decision on which is due in May. If invited, a full proposal will be delivered in July, with work commencing in November 2011. Wendy Goodfriend offered BCDC's assistance with developing materials for the full proposal, and to share with the project team some of their experience with public response to maps that project future sea level rise. She noted that coordination with [Adapting to Rising Tides](#) project would be useful.

**e. PACE post-doc (T. Suchanek)**

Tom Suchanek reported that a proposal from USGS and NOAA was approved to fund a PACE ([Post-docs Applying Climate Expertise](#)) fellow for two years in the Bay Area. After reviewing proposals from candidates, Dr. Benet Duncan has been selected to fill the position beginning in the fall. Tom, Kelley, Dan Cayan at Scripps, and Jay Stachowicz at Bodega Marine Laboratory will serve as the mentors for her project, which is entitled *Developing a Set of Linked Environmental and Biological Climate Change Indicators for the North-Central California Coast*. She will work from the GOF office, assuming that the new federal budget compromise did not eliminate the funding for her position (\$130k over two years). Dr. Duncan has a strong

background in modeling, including downscaling of GCM results. It was noted that this work would contribute to the work of the Science and Management Committee as it develops a monitoring plan, and that the indicators identified in this project should be considered for their usefulness in communicating climate change to the public.

- **Kelley will advise group when she determines the status of the funding situation for Benet Duncan, the PACE fellow.**

**f. National Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) Program (M. Stewart)**

Mendel described the National Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) Program, which has been established to inventory the flora and fauna of wildlife refuges. He noted that there is a strong interest in implementing this program with a focus on making the data useful for climate change planning. About \$1.5M has been made available to USFWS Region VIII (CA/NV), and among other items this funding will support a new staff member in Mendel's office whose work he hopes will help achieve BAECCC objectives. About \$200,000 has been made available on a competitive basis in Region VIII, against which millions in proposals have been submitted.

Mendel also noted in this discussion that because the [Landscape Conservation Cooperatives \(LCCs\)](#) are so large, he believes that regional efforts to implement the collaborative objectives of the LCC program will be very important. In that context, he sees BAECCC fitting in very well to the LCC program, and possibly being a model that could be of national interest. He noted that the LCC and I&M programs are priorities of Dan Ashe, the yet-to-confirmed Director of the USFWS.

- **Mendel will advise regarding when funding announcements is made for I&M projects; Tom will do the same for the LCC announcements.**

## **5. Policy Updates**

**a. Ocean Protection Council Resolution on Sea Level Rise (N. Hitchcock)**

Nadine reported that the Ocean Protection Council adopted a [resolution](#) on Sea Level Rise that requires agencies/organization obtaining OPC funding to consider ranges of sea level rise projections when a project is developed for funded. In particular, the strategy is to encourage the use of higher SLR estimates when there is more at risk (higher value projects), with these ranges specified and to be regularly updated.

The resolution has been produced in response to the [Governor's Executive Order S-13-08](#) from 2008. This order also directed the California Natural Resources Agency, in cooperation with the Department of Water Resources, California Energy Commission, California's coastal management agencies, the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and Caltrans to commission the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), working through the National Research Council, to assemble a panel of volunteer experts to produce a Sea Level Rise Assessment Report which also requested that the National Academy of Sciences examine the issue of sea level rise on the California coast. Abe Doherty has been following the implementation of this study, which was slow to get started but is now well underway. The report is scheduled for release in January 2012, and Patrick indicated that he is well aware of the study and it's progress. He noted that some of the world's leading sea level rise experts are involved, including [Stefan Rahmstorf](#) of

Potsdam University, and he expects the study will reflect the current thinking among experts that the IPCC SLR projections from 2007 are too low. The NAS report process provides opportunity for public input during initial scoping, but not for public review and comment prior to publication (extensive peer review from leading scientists is part of the publication process).

It is not yet clear how the results of the NAS study will be used, although it will likely be influential for deciding on SLR scenarios to consider for planning purposes. Abe noted that he expects the NAS study will not supplant existing State guidance with regard to planning for SLR, but will be use to update it. Andy noted that BAECCC should be prepared for release of this study given its scientific credibility.

## **6. Fundraising**

### **a. LCC and I&M proposal processes (M. Stewart/T. Suchanek)**

Tom reported that 174 pre-proposals totaling \$4M were received for the \$850k in grant funds available from the LCC. These came from a wide range of institutions, and 41 full proposals have been invited for delivery by April 12. Proposals will be reviewed on May 2.

### **b. SCC proposal to LCC for PRBO SLR rise tool development**

As Nadine had to depart, Ellie briefly described a proposal that was submitted that was submitted by PRBO and collaborators to develop a SLR tool that aids conservation managers with access to data and information.

### **c. Other opportunities**

Andy noted that the Wildlife Conservation Society has issued an RFP (proposal deadline April 29) in collaboration with the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation for proposals to support projects that demonstrate effective interventions for wildlife adaptation to climate change. He proposed that a standing agenda item be funding opportunities, and encouraged all BAECCC participants to share their knowledge of proposal opportunities early (particularly if we know about plans for RFPs).

## **BREAK 12:00 – 12:15**

## **Action Items**

### **7. Request for support letter from Sonoma Ecology Center for California Conservation Commons Proposal to CAL-LCC (D. DiPietro)**

Deanne DiPietro of the Sonoma Ecology Center (SEC) described a proposal to the LCC (one of the 41 invited proposals) for a Climate Adaptation Commons, and was approaching BAECCC for a letter of support. This proposal seeks to develop a location for tools, utilities, and communication systems that allow conservation managers access to data and information that can assist with planning for climate change. They recognize this as a first step in a long-term need to construct a support an information clearinghouse, and along with their collaborators they are looking to the LCC to help initiate what they see as a community of practice that forms a constructive interface between data creators/custodians and conservation managers.

Tom described the protocols that the LCC proposal process is using to avoid conflict of interest for reviewers, and it seemed likely that if BAECCC submitted a letter of support many BAECCC participants who are also reviewers for the LCC would need to recuse themselves when the SEC proposal was being considered. Given this information, it was decided that a letter of support from BAECCC for this proposal was not appropriate or useful.

- **Andy will develop a draft policy regarding letters of support for consideration by the Steering Committee**

8. Determine dates for future BAECCC meeting dates for 2011 (A. Gunther)

In the interest of time it was agreed Andy would poll people on line to establish the dates for remaining BAECCC meetings in 2011.

- **Andy will suggest dates for the next BAECCC meeting(s) using an on-line poll**

9. Presentation: An Introduction to Climate Central and the Bay Area Upland research Network Team

This item was moved up in the agenda in order to allow keep Dr. Heller's presentation on schedule. Nicole Heller of [Climate Central](#) presented an introduction to her organization, which is bringing scientists and journalists together to deliver high quality information about climate change to the general public. CC was started by Jane Lubchenco and Steven Pacala, and is not an advocacy organization. They have relationships with local media, including Gretchen Weber at KQED at climate watch, and see themselves as a scientific and communication collaborator with BAECCC. Nicole noted that several of the scientists on CC staff are actively publishing in the scientific literature, and CC is working to build web-based tools that allow people to explore the implications of the research. She presented an example of [work by CC scientist Ben Strauss](#) has conducted on developing a national, interactive map of sea level rise. She also noted that she has been selected along with 20 other scientists as the first group of [Google Climate Fellows](#), who will be supported by google.org to enhance communication of climate science.

Nicole also very briefly introduced the Bay Area Uplands Research Network Team (BURNT), a collaboration of researchers led by David Ackerly (and know previously as "the Ackerly Group). They are focused upon conducting research that helps create a landscape that is robust and resilient in the face of climate change.

## **Discussion Items**

10. BAECCC Operations (A. Gunther)

a. Steering Committee operations

In the interest of time this discussion was postponed to the next Steering Committee meeting.

b. Plan to establish and charge Committees

Andy indicated his concern that with one coordinator and several Committees and working groups it would be possible for BAECCC to get overwhelmed by process. He noted that if Committees were established and allowed to set their own agendas, the result could be more actions and ideas than BAECCC could deal with effectively. He suggested that at least initially the BAECCC Steering Committee provide the Committees with a specific charge, and seek findings and recommendations to facilitate action by the Steering Committee.

Christina Sloop noted that the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture has established a Monitoring Committee that has had one meeting so far. She suggested that this Committee could serve as the “estuarine” task force on the BAECCC organizational chart.

- **Andy- follow up with Christina to explore the SFBJV Monitoring Committee serving as a BAECCC working group and how would work**

c. Criteria for becoming a BAECCC project

Andy noted that previous meeting notes had indicated a desire to identify a set of “BAECCC projects,” but there was not yet a set of criteria or a process for developing this list. One obvious criterion will be that a BAECCC project will contribute to BAECCC achieving its objectives. He will send out a request to BAECCC members to solicit these criteria.

- **Andy to send a request for people to send their suggested criteria of what constitutes a BAECCC project**

11. State of the Estuary Conference (A. Gunther)

Matt reported that the State of the Estuary (SOE) Conference Steering Committee solicited ideas for concurrent sessions to be held during the two afternoons at a meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Prior to the meeting it was clear there was interest in climate change as a topic, and Ellie put together a preliminary list of potential speakers for a BAECCC session with a commitment for Andy to serve as the session chair if the SOE Steering Committee was interested. Matt noted that there was interest, and we will know soon if there will be a BAECCC session at the SOE conference.

- **Those with ideas for possible presentations for a BAECCC-sponsored session for at the State of the Estuary Conferences should send their ideas to Andy**