



CITY OF ARCATA WETLANDS AND CREEKS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL 2015

**For Presentation to the Arcata City Council
May 4, 2016**

Committee Members:

*Bob Brown, Chair
Vanessa Metz, Vice-Chair
Dan Gale
Chris McAuliffe
Bob Pagliucco
Joe Seney
Jeremy Svehla*

Staff Liaisons:

*Julie Neander, Deputy Director of Community Services, Environmental Services
Department
Emily Benvie, Environmental Programs Manager, Environmental Services Department*



**24 Years
1992-2016**

The Wetlands and Creeks Committee was established in 1992. The Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council, City Manager and City staff in matters related to policies, management and projects affecting creeks, wetland and tideland resources in Arcata. Its seven members, appointed by the City Council, serve overlapping three-year terms and represent various areas of expertise, knowledge/interest.

The Committee is to have regularly scheduled meetings every month. The Committee held five meetings during 2015. The Committee's regularly scheduled study session with the City Council was held on October 20, 2015 in conjunction with the Open Space and Agriculture and Forest Management Committees.

The Committee reviewed and/or made recommendations on the following items:

A. Creek and Wetlands/Policies/Ordinances/Management Plans

1. The Committee reviewed and discussed the *California Department of Fish and Wildlife Northern Region Technical Memorandum, May 14, 2014, Development, Land Use, and Climate Change Impacts on Wetland and Riparian Habitats – A Summary of Scientifically Supported Conservation Strategies, Mitigation Measures, and Best Management Practices.*
2. The Committee reviewed and gave input on the Year 3 MS4 Implementation Plan.
3. The Committee reviewed the Regional Water Quality Control Board's Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region to Establish the Policy in Support of Restoration in the North Coast Region.
4. The Committee provided comments and suggested edits on the Arcata Municipal Code sections on the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary and the Aldergrove Marsh.
5. The Committee, along with the Forest Management Committee and the Open Space & Agriculture Committee, provided feedback on the County of Humboldt's proposed outdoor cannabis regulations.

B. Management of City-owned Creeks and Wetlands

1. By unanimous vote, supported a temporary installation of Peace Bowl sculpture at the Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary during the Hiroshima/Nagasaki Lantern Ceremony events. However, the committee did not support the permanent installation of the structure based on the concern that it would set a precedent of allowing private groups to erect a statue at the AMWS and this is contrary to the

goals of the AMWS.

2. The Committee provided informal guidance on the following restoration enhancement projects:
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Beith Creek Restoration Project
 - Rail with Trail Project
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service South Jacoby Estuary Project
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Janes Creek–Reed Canary Grass Control
 - McDaniel Slough
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fickle Hill Creek Project
 - Department of Water Resources Proposition 84 Parking Lot Low Impact Development (LID) Retrofits
 - Volunteer Work Days
 - Coastal Conservancy Climate Ready Grant, Living Shorelines Project

6. The Committee received reports from staff on the status of open space acquisitions.

7. The Committee provided comments on the High Density LID offsite protocol and the Draft Post-Construction LID Manual.

8. The Committee had three joint study sessions with the Open Space and Agriculture Committee. One study session focused on Sea Level Rise Impacts and Adaptation Options for the City of Arcata; another study session focused on the South Jacoby Creek Restoration Design; the third study session focused on the County of Humboldt’s proposed outdoor cannabis regulations.

C. Development Projects

- The Committee reviewed and discussed the Wolf and Hone 9th Street Mixed Use Project and its lack of LID implications for future LID projects, specifically allowing off-site mitigation.

- The Committee reviewed the Prop 84 LID Retrofit Projects (7th Street, Arcata High School, and Humboldt State University).

D. Public Outreach

1. Rex Jackman of Caltrans gave a presentation on Sea Level Rise Analysis and Proposed Adaptation/Response Strategies.

2. Committee Member Pagliuco served on the selection committee for artists’ submissions for the Downstream Designs Project, in which murals were painted over storm drains to help raise awareness about stormwater draining to Humboldt Bay.

E. Ongoing Tasks

1. Investigate incentives and opportunities for the City and property owners to implement LID retrofits and assist with outreach on LID.
2. Complete the EPA Water Quality Score Card.
3. Assist with the Phase II MS4 Stormwater Management Program
4. Assist with updates to the City website to highlight past and current creeks and wetlands restoration projects.
5. Continue to assist with Baylands and Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary Management Plans

F. Future Tasks

1. Assist with Developing Vegetation Management Protocols, as it relates to wetlands, creeks and other ESHAs
2. Review existing Drainage Master Plan and make recommendations for future updates
3. LCP Update, Review Draft and Provide Comments
4. Climate Change Sea Level Rise Adaptation Strategies
5. Conduct joint meetings with the Forest Management, Open Space and Agriculture, Parks and Recreation Committees on topics of mutual interest
6. Develop recommendations on recreational use in and adjacent to sensitive habitats.
7. Open Space Acquisition Plan/Matrix update to include wetland/creek valuation in assessment and importance of listed species.