



## **CITY OF ARCATA WETLANDS AND CREEKS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL 2016**

**For Presentation to the Arcata City Council  
April 19, 2017**

*Committee Members:*

*Bob Brown, Chair  
Vanessa Metz, Vice-Chair  
Hollie Hall  
Chris McAuliffe  
Bob Pagliucco  
Wes Smith  
Jeremy Svehla*

*Staff Liaison:*

*Emily Benvie, Environmental Programs Manager, Environmental Services Department*



**25 Years  
1992-2017**

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. In 2016, the City's Environmental Programs Manager, Emily Benvie, became the new staff liaison for this committee.

The Committee is to have regularly scheduled meetings every month. The Committee held seven meetings during 2016. The Committee's regularly scheduled study session with the City Council was held on October 27, 2016 in conjunction with the Open Space & Agriculture, Parks & Recreation, 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 received an update from City staff on the Local Coastal Plan (LCP) Update, then reviewed and provided comments on the first Administrative Draft Plan. (2/16/16)
2. The Committee compared and contrasted the City's regulations with the State's MS4 regulations in order to re-evaluate City policies. (2/16/16)
3. The Committee provided guidance on the implementation of the reed canary grass abatement project 2017.
4. The Committee, along with the Forest Management Committee, the Open Space & Agriculture Committee, and the Parks & Recreation Committee, provided input on existing and potential open space and park funding mechanisms. (Study session 10-27-17)
5. The Committee provided guidance on the analysis of the MS4 Program Effective Assessment Implementation Plan (PEAIP).

B. Management of City-owned Creeks and Wetlands

1. The Committee began providing direction to City staff in the development of vegetation management/maintenance policies for the City.
2. The Committee reviewed the permits and grant requirements for Baylands Properties to help inform long term management. (3/15/16)
3. The Committee provided informal guidance on the following restoration enhancement projects:
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service South Jacoby Estuary Project

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Janes Creek–Reed Canary Grass Control
  - Volunteer Work Days
4. The Committee received reports from staff on the status of open space acquisitions.

#### C. Development Projects

1. The Committee reviewed and provided input on wetland mitigation measures pertinent to a creek side annexation in the 2000 Foster Avenue area. (3/15 & 5/17/16).

#### D. Public Outreach

1. Streamline Planning & GHD, in conjunction with the Committee, conducted a tour of the Low-Impact Development projects within the City of Arcata (parking lot retrofits) to help educate contractors and builders on challenges, strategies and lessons learned in L.I.D. projects. (2/16/16)

#### 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. Assist with the Phase II MS4 Stormwater Management Program
3. Assist with updates to the City website to highlight past and current creeks and wetlands restoration projects.
4. Continue to assist with Baylands and Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary Management Plans
5. Assist with Developing Vegetation Management Protocols, as it relates to wetlands, creeks and other ESHAs

#### F. Future Tasks

1. Review existing Drainage Master Plan and make recommendations for future updates
2. LCP Update, Review Draft and Provide Comments
3. Climate Change Sea Level Rise Adaptation Strategies
4. Conduct joint meetings with the Forest Management, Open Space and Agriculture, Parks and Recreation Committees on topics of mutual interest

5. Develop recommendations on recreational use in and adjacent to sensitive habitats.
6. Open Space Acquisition Plan/Matrix update to include wetland/creek valuation in assessment and importance of listed species.
7. Coastal Conservancy Climate Ready Grant, Living Shorelines Project
8. Conduct a second tour of the Low-Impact Development projects within the City of Arcata (parking lot retrofits).