

North Bay Watershed Association Board of Directors Meeting - Summary

November 4, 2022 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

MEETING HELD AT THE

City of Petaluma Ellis Creek Treatment Plant
3890 Cypress Dr, Petaluma, CA 94954

Zoom available for those wishing to attend virtually
www.nbwatershed.org

1. **Welcome and Call to Order—Directors or Member Representatives Present Included:**

Michael Boorstein – Central Marin Sanitation Agency	Kevin McDonnell – City of Petaluma
Cory Bytof – City of San Rafael	Pamela Meigs – Ross Valley Sanitary District
Damon Connolly – County of Marin	Elizabeth Patterson – Solano County Water Agency
Gustavo Goncalves – County of Marin	Maxene Spellman – Friends of the Petaluma River
Susan Gorin – County of Sonoma	Stephanie Bastianon - Friends of the Petaluma River
Megan Clark – Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Marin Conservation League
Curtis Paxton – Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Andy Rodgers – NBWA
Megan Clark – Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Sabrina Marson – NBWA
Jack Gibson – Marin Municipal Water District	Cheryl Holt – Public
Larry Russell – Marin Municipal Water District	Stephen Keese – Public
Leon Garcia – Napa County Flood Control District	Neil Hancock – Public
Rick Fraites – North Marin Water District	Matthew Dabner – City of Petaluma
Jean Mariani – Novato Sanitary District	Christopher Bolt – City of Petaluma
Chelsea Thompson – City of Petaluma	Gina Benedetti-Petnic – City of Petaluma

Twelve NBWA board members attended the meeting comprised of 28-member agency staff, stakeholders, partners, and interested members of the public.

Call to Order – Director Gibson called the meeting to order at 9:38 am in-person and via Zoom.

Matthew Dabner, Lead Operator at the City of Petaluma Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility provided a welcome and overview of the plant. The treatment plant was installed in 2009. The plant is a wastewater treatment plant for the City of Petaluma and Penngrove. The City manages a biological secondary process; treating the waste using micro-organisms grown and kept at the plant. The facility currently takes in about 3.5 million gallons of water per day and they are capable of producing about 5 million gallons of recycled water per day on average. They have treatment wetlands, which are part of their treatment process and natural dechlorination of their recycled water before it gets to the Petaluma River. The 10 ponds on 2-300 acres store water that during certain times of the year are released to the Petaluma River. The recycled water goes to ag users, dairy ranchers and vineyards. Some of the water also goes to parks, schools, some residential landscapes. They have 9 pump stations in town that bring waste streams to the station.

Many people utilize the trails daily.

Questions/Comments

Director Russel: What percentage of your flow is recovered/recyclable?

Matthew: During summer/irrigation months, we're capable of recycling pretty much all the water that comes into the facility on a daily basis.

Director Russel: Do you think it might be close to 50%

Matthew: It may be close to that.

Director Gorin: She is part of the Petaluma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) and serves as Chair for the Sonoma Valley GSA. Can you talk about where you are in the process for considering extending recycle water lines for vineyards?

Chelsea: The City of Petaluma is in the process of working on a integrated water master plan. It originally started as a recycled water mater plan. Part of this will be looking at pipeline expansion to additional ag and urban users for potable offset, including the Lakeville expansion, as well as looking into other types of water and uses for recycled water. Potentially storing it so there is ability to use recycled water year-round.

Director Gorin: Andy is shepherding, along with his colleagues, the Sonoma County GSA's, and they are depending, she thinks, on infiltration to recharge the groundwater in Sonoma Valley, as well as aquifer storage and recovery. It might be a good education topic on where the state is with the State allowing recycled water to recharge the aquifer (if in fact they are working on that) or do they need to create settling ponds.

2. **General Public Comment** – None

3. **Agenda Review and Approve Past Meeting Minutes** – Chair Gibson asked for any Board members to speak up if there were requested changes to the agenda. No comments.

Director Boorstein moved to approve the agenda and minutes; Director Patterson seconded—
Unanimously accepted.

4. **Treasurer's Report**

No comments. Director Boorstein moved to approve the October Treasurer Reports. Director Patterson seconded—Unanimously accepted.

5. **Guest Presentation— Guest Presentation— Petaluma River Greenway - Fostering Enhancement of a Downtown Watershed Resource**

Stephanie Bastianon, Executive Director, and Maxene Spellman, Board Member, Friends of the Petaluma River
Stephanie and Maxene provided an overview of plans to progress a multi-benefit river corridor project in an undeveloped and tidally influenced area near downtown Petaluma that would provide public access, mitigate for sea level rise, protect sensitive habitat, and serve as a model for riparian corridor protection in the watershed.

Friends of the Petaluma River is looking at preserving the corridor of the upper Petaluma River.

Topics:

- Overview of Upper Petaluma River Corridor
 - Review includes stretch from Lynch Creek to Corona
 - Limited development
 - Lush riparian habitat
 - Fresh and tidal wetlands
- Parcel Study – Outputs
 - Review Opportunities & Constraints
 - Conservation Values Map & Summary Report
 - Parcel Map and Overview
 - Concept Map
 - Assets for storytelling
- Needs
 - Begin to create some “weather” around the Parkway concept
 - It’s beautiful, but is it significant? Is it worth the cost?
 - Qualitative and quantitative information related to:
 - Community benefits

- City and county plans
- Funder priorities

Conservation Values	Opportunities and Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Economy ○ Quality of Life for Residents ○ Public Access and Education ○ Climate Change Resilience and Mitigation ○ Protection from Stormwater ○ Water Quality Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Land Ownership ○ Land Use & Zoning ○ Potential Development ○ Hazard Risks ○ Policy Protections

- Top Conservation Values
 - Quality of life for residents
 - 16,000 people live within ¼-mile from an off-street bike path that leads to the Parkway.
 - Forms visible “gateway” to Petaluma for 108,000 drivers daily.
 - Public Access and Education
 - Complete the planned Petaluma River Trail
 - Fulfill a planned park along Lynch Creek Trail
 - Increase fishing and watercraft put-in/take-out options
 - Climate Change Resilience for People
 - Cooling effect where Extreme Heat Days are expected to double
 - Avoid flood risks from expected 3.5’ of Sea Level Rise
 - Climate Change Resilience for Nature
 - Ensure lower and upper river habitat connectivity through town for dozens of aquatic and terrestrial animals (27 species recorded since 2016)
 - Climate Change Mitigation
 - Avoided GHG soil carbon emissions: equivalent to removing 336 cars for 1 year
 - Sequestration through riparian forest restoration: equivalent to removing 509 cars for 1 year
 - Protection from Stormwater Flooding
 - Let nature absorb flood waters and storm energy
 - 35% of the Parkway area is within the 100-year floodplain
 - 47% is within the 500-year floodplain
 - Water Quality Protection
 - 100% of the Parkway area is within a State-designated “hydrogeologically vulnerable area”
 - Parkway’s natural area already provides retention of 174 kg/year of nitrogen
- Top Opportunities and Constraints
 - Acquisition Opportunities
 - Although 45 parcels in the project area...
 - 7 owners → 17 priority parcels
 - 5 owners → 13 “essential” parcels
 - Zoning and Development Plans
 - All parcels zoned for development
 - 7 parcels → R5 Medium Density Residential (8-18 units/acre)
 - 5 parcels → C2 Community Commercial (shopping)
 - 4 parcels → BP Business Park (office parks)
 - 4 significant transportation improvements are planned

- Hazards
 - Flooding
 - 5 out of 17 parcels are 100% within flood zone
 - 12 of 17 parcels are at least 50% within flood zone
 - Earthquake/Liquefaction
 - Shaking hazard class: Severe Shaking
 - Liquefaction hazard: Moderate to Very High
- Immediate Funding Opportunities
 - Top Opportunities
 - State Coastal Conservancy
 - \$500M for FY 22/23 and 23/24
 - Land-based climate resilience projects
 - Sea Level Rise Adaptation
 - Natural Infrastructure
 - Carbon Sequestration
 - Urban Greening
 - Funds planning and implementation
 - SF Bay Program is currently soliciting projects
The State Coastal Conservancy recognizes the urgency and importance of preparing the coast, and the people and wildlife that depend on the coast, for sea level rise and other climate change impacts. –SCC (Sept. 2021)

1	Lynch Creek Trail	\$27,000
2	Trestle Rehabilitation Design	\$475,000
3	Small Craft Center	\$180,000
4	Bay Area Ridge Trail, McNear Link	\$121,000
5	Petaluma Marsh Acquisition, Enhancement, and Access	\$2,650,856
6	PRBO San Francisco Bay Research Center	\$201,000
7	Adobe Creek Fish Barrier Removal	\$62,973
	TOTAL	\$3,717,829

- State Natural Resources Agency
 - Wildlife Conservation Board Sustainable Groundwater Management Program
 - Urban Flood Protection
 - Urban Greening
 - Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation
 - 30x30 Initiative – “Pathways” plan finalized in April 2022.
 - Climate resilience

- Equitable Access
 - Habitat
 - \$382M in Governor's 22/23 budget
- Partners
 - City of Petaluma
 - “How do we ensure the River acts as the lifeblood of the community?” Peggy Flynn, City Manager
 - "Everything we're talking about today is In line with what we've been hearing, what we're driving toward." --Heather Hines, Lead City Planning
 - Sonoma Water
 - Zone 2A Flood Protection - \$40k for parcel study
 - Sonoma Land Trust
 - Providing guidance and planning support
 - Possible lead project partner
 - Local Leaders
 - Mayor Teresa Barrett
 - Councilmembers
 - Supervisor Rabbitt
 - Senator McGuire
 - Congressman Huffman
 - Community Organizations & Agencies
 - Cool Cities Petaluma
 - Petaluma River Park
 - Sonoma Resource Conservation District
 - Sonoma County Open Space & Agricultural Preservation District
- Desired Next Steps
 - Community Visioning
 - Planning and process for engaging community
 - Equitable access
 - Landowner Outreach
 - Provide funds for property negotiations including appraisals and phase I and II studies
 - Planning
 - Analyze intersection with current goals of various state plans and initiatives.
 - Conduct analysis of current ecology including habitat conditions and potentials
 - Conduct detailed hydrologic study to determine water sources and flood risks
 - Expand existing River Access & Enhancement Plan as it applies to the Upper River
 - Analysis of the potential to restore habitat, retain water, reduce flood risks, mitigate climate change and provide a new hiking/biking route to the north end of Petaluma. Add the historical ecology information.
 - Conduct trail alignment and use study, including a public process. Develop preliminary designs and environmental studies for trails and restoration projects.
 - Develop preliminary designs for trails and restoration projects

Questions/Comments

Director Patterson: How did you calculate the carbon Sequestration?

Stephanie Bastianon: our consultant Tom Robinson prepared the calculations.

Director Meigs: I'm also on the Sierra Club and I'm Curious what you envision regarding watercrafts because you're promoting wildlife.

Stephanie Bastianon: This stretch of the river that is not going to be able to accommodate any sort of large watercraft like powered boats. Right now a lot of kayakers and stand-up paddle boards go up there, and I think that's what we would want to encourage that.

Director Meigs: You may want to consider noting 'Non-motorized watercraft'.

Director Russel: You have funding indicated on the last slide for property transactions. Are you still allowing building in the flood zone?

Stephanie Bastianon: There is a development right now that is planned somewhat in a flood zone. The city may want encourage people to build someplace else. We want to be as fair as possible, to any landowners that are willing to sell and you know as getting public funding, and we can only pay fair market value.

Director Patterson: That's true, but you can build a flood zone, if you raise the elevation and also have flood insurance. You might ask the question about your objective standards, because, my frustration with the State legislature is that they're really good about allowing development every place all the time but they have not given us the tools to be able to say that there is public health safety issues. CEQA typically would identify those and say you need to mitigate, and you could do that all right and get the development out of the flood zone. You can encourage legislation to deal with that you can adopt your own ordinances in the city and the county.

Stephanie Bastianon: There are a lot of negotiations which were very happy to have Sonoma Land Trust on our side to help with; they're very experienced and I'm sure they have been through that in the past.

Gina Benedetti-Petnic: I'm Assistant Director Public Works Utilities and plan administrator for the City of Petaluma and it just to provide a little clarification, I can't speak to valuation which was the nexus of that question but I can speak a little bit to our current objective standards in our municipal code for our flood plain districts. We do not allow development in the flood way. We do allow development in the 100-year flood plain with conditions. So building your first floor, and any equipment essentially one foot above baseline elevation and then we have a special district that I believe most of this falls within the limits of that we call our zero net fill area, and that has additional requirements to build 2 foot above base elevation and that's sort of the basic objective current standards we have in our community code, and I will say that this is being looked at very closely now with our by our general plan update team, and we are in the process of vetting some new sea level rise maps and plug plane maps. I expect our objective standards will become stricter with the new general plan update, but that will take a while and to implement a new zoning ordinance.

Director Fraitas: I've noticed, my travels up and down 101 looking at this property, there seems to be a homeless camp somewhere in there and I'm wondering if that's going to be any kind of problem for you where you have to relocate?

Stephanie Bastianon: There are several encampments right now in this stretch and we've all seen that play out on various urban trails and other locations. We already manage a city park that has a lot of homelessness surrounding it and so it's something that we've already been quite aware of. We work very closely with some local groups like COTS which employs people experiencing homelessness to pick up trash and so we envision that they will be the partners in this endeavor as well. We will continue to work with all of our partners to address that issue where we can.

Director Clark: when you talk about 100-year flood, 500- year flood, are those are those the old levels, or what we authentically now expect it.

Gina Benedetti-Petnic: Those categories are determined by FEMA; I don't get to make them up. Those are based on the existing FEMA designations, and we have no control over those. But what we can control is how we look at them. In our new mapping that we're working on now we have modeled in climate change. We're taking into account frequency of storms and severity of storms and compensating as we look at this, so we're very aware that climate change impact, and while we don't have guidance from FEMA on that we have taken the liberty to address it ourselves.

Director Patterson: There was a major, a flood study that was shared by the State and the Feds in the nineties, and it was millions of dollars, I think in 1990 dollars it was 35 million dollars, and when FEMA came in and was doing the 500 level looking in the central valley, a lot of the farm bureaus, especially Fresno, blew the whole program out of the water and killed the program didn't just argue with it, it actually killed the congressionally authorized program. So FEMA is in certain areas is much more controversial and is also the basis of some of your insurance.

Director Patterson: I have two questions, Is there any connection to flooding from Copeland Creek, stream and flooding and Petaluma?

Gina Benedetti-Petnic: it's not part of the watershed.

Director Patterson: The second thing is, is there any reason to ask State Lands Commission because its tidal river?

Gina Benedetti-Petnic: Not on this project. We are working with them on another project that further down the river.

Director Russel: In defense of engineers in FEMA and making these estimates, remember that we only have at the outside 150 years of data. These are all projections based on a very tiny database and that's why these things are so hard. Recall that the good judgment still prevails in Katrina in New Orleans. The French Quarter had a half an inch of water under the worst situation in Katrina. The ninth ward was 15 feet under the water, and the French were smart enough 400 years ago to build on the Highland, not on the Lowland. One of the problems in land use development is that these swap lands the flood plains are cheap. That's why people built on them when allowed to. It's a cooperative effort between the engineers who do the estimates and the and the regulators, the government officials who control the growth and where it grows. It really isn't fair to criticize the 100-year storm to be a 10-year storm it. It's because the database is so limited and the projections are required. The reality is, you know, we need a 1,000 years of data, or 10,000 years of data to get a 1,000 year storm, or perhaps even a 100 year storm accurately predicted.

Kevin McDonnell, City Council, City of Petaluma: The parcels I think we're talking about are very large parcels with a bit of contour to them. The parcel in question recently, the housing is well back from the River; there's hundreds of feet of river buffer there and was done under CEQA, was sued under CEQA, and is proceeding. The key point is what planning does, with general plan does for the future, and adopting sea level rise guidelines, and putting that into objective standards. But in this case in point, there's a lot of effort that was made. Put well back from flood zones and things like that.

6. Executive Director Report

Andy Rodgers, Executive Director

- Updates since last meeting
 - Attended IRWM coordinating committee meeting on October 24 – NBWA region well represented on PSC!
 - Director Patterson: If there is any way to share the proposals? Maybe we could do that at a future meeting because they're innovative, and from everything from tribal efforts on the Guadalupe to help cleaning up the trash and working with the homeless to what I consider wonderful flood management projects that are very expensive. So, it's the whole range and maybe share those some of the highlights of their 17 proposals.
 - Attended CASQA legislative subcommittee meeting on October 25
 - Attended North Bay RCIS public meeting on October 19
 - Attended RRWA tour of Potter Valley Project on October 27
 - Evaluated grant funding opportunities for regional programs
- Administrative Activities
 - Programmed FY 2022-23 work plan
 - Coordinated with Board Chair, Deputy Director, Finance Manager
 - AR – Membership dues
 - AP – Subconsultants
 - Updated website and meeting packet information

Andy also mentioned that Director Patterson was teaching a course at Sonoma State and that he, Chris Choo, Sandi Potter, who retired from Windsor recently (and also worked at Permit Sonoma) participated in a panel discussion at SSU on careers in water, private sector and public sector hybrid, things going on, and what drove them to become involved. Interesting and inspiring.

Director Patterson: The future is that land use planning and water management are joined. The class was funded by a Sonoma Water grant and was on Managing Land Use and Water. The class is a much more practical kind of application.

- Communications
 - Held second in-person meeting @ NSD on Oct 7!
 - Coordinated with members to host meetings west to east throughout the region – Marin, Sonoma, Napa, American Canyon
 - Regional partners
 - Subject matter experts and speakers
- Committees
 - Attended Land Use and Water Infrastructure initiative subcommittee meeting October 11
 - Attended coordinated messaging campaign planning meeting on October 31
 - Met with Chair, Deputy Director, and staff to progress NBWA initiatives
- NBWA FY 2022/23 Work Plan
 - Executive Director services
 - Continue transition to in-person/hybrid (including field trips) meetings
 - Member communications and advocacy
 - Convene Executive/Admin Steering Committee – December 2022/January 2023
 - Prioritize and provide direction on implementing initiatives
 - Implement focused regional initiatives
 - Water services infrastructure and land use/housing – Focused workshop #2, winter/spring 2023
 - Align missions and programs with NBWRA – Chairs meeting December 1, NBWA Board meeting Feb 3
 - Annual General Managers meeting – March 2023
 - Phase I (exploratory) DroughtSMART & FireSMART branding pilot – Winter 2023

- Proposal to support convening a series of ACWA-endorsed regional industry workshops
- Participate in regional forums
 - IRWM, RCIS, SFBRA, others
- Convene Joint Technical Committee
 - Programmatic planning and funding
- Communications
 - Quarterly newsletter
 - Update NBWA website
- Confirming 2022/23 calendar dates – First Friday of every month - Except of course for holiday
 - December 2 – Field trip?
 - January 6 – potential skip month
 - February 3 - In person/hybrid
 - March 3 – In person/hybrid
 - April 7 – Field trip
 - May 5 - In person/hybrid
 - June 2 – Field trip?
- Topics in development:
 - Regional Resiliency (Nov 4), SFBay Basin Plan Amendment (Nov 4 or Feb 3), Napa County Field Trip (Dec 2), Environmental Education & Grant Funding (March 3), Solano County Field Trip (April 7), Urban Scale Carbon Sequestration Initiatives (April 7) Regulatory Compliance Partnerships, Baylands Strategies, DroughtSMART/FireSMART, OneWater OneBay Strategic Initiatives, DWR & SWRCB Drought Assistance Programs and Resources, Collaboration-Based Funding Opportunities, Water Management & Conveyance Innovations, Capital and Natural Assets Management, Small Grants and Scholarship Program, New Members!

7. Board Information Exchange and Drought Updates

Members highlighted issues and shared items of interest.

Director Clark: We were planning a ribbon cutting ceremony for our secondary treatment project in December. But we've got some wipe up to do so it'll be early in the spring. Chris Degabriel has been consulting with Curtis Paxton, which is wonderful getting him up to speed and we've been doing all this other strategic planning.

Director Meigs: We just got our general managers monthly report. We're putting millions into fixing the pipes and the pumps, he had a great picture identifying and fixing a **void**— it's a section of pipe that is broken and collapsed, exposing the inside of the pipe to soils and backfield that surrounds the pipe, so it could be broken pieces in it, and debris which then goes all the way down or blocks it, or whatever, and we found one that was 76 years old. We're talking also about locating buried manholes, using certain devices to find them.

Director Garcia: We had a meeting report from our water Division on how we're dealing with water conservation issues. It identified 194 water meter leaks. Those have been repaired, replace 38 service connections, replace 59 water meters, and repaired 5 water mains. In the past meetings on our recycle water delivery system. We did the Max out at 470 customers. That was just a matter of our capacity to serve, we're taking probably 6-to-9-acre feet of water saved. How this works is it's a training program takes about 5 min roughly on how to use it is for only for landscaping ornamentals that are not to be used for vegetable gardens. They received free barrels from a local food distributor for their recycled water program. We have a portable water reduction of 31% in the city. Residential is 33% reduction. Commercial is 16%. City overall is 64%. City properties and others is 37%.

Andy and I had a tour of the ecology center with Janelle Sellick; that's still going forward. Some of today's presentation will be valuable to her and he will share it.

Director Boorstein: We have plans for a 200 and a half million-dollar organic waste input into our facility for digestion, and we may actually receive a 2 and a half million dollar grant from CalRecycle two days before the Board was going to take it up and award the contracting for that, we discovered a clause in CalRecycle that said it had to be a certain amount of union workers working on the project, and that made our contractor not able to do that so we scrambled and discussed it, and talked about rebidding the whole project again, which would have been pretty massive. We ask CalRecycle if there was there any wiggle room. We put the vote off, and the day after we had the meeting CalRecycle came back and said go forward. So we had a special meeting and said, yeah, let's do it. We're all shovel ready to go on that one. Construction will start very soon and our second while we were out there visiting, we saw that the second digester didn't have cover on it at the; that cover's been installed and it's inflated, and it's coming back up to speed takes about a month to bring the little organisms back up to speed and so that should be up and fully running right away. Our Jenbacher engine is fully provisioned and approved by PG&E so if there's a power outage, and we can now run on bio gas instead of having to flare the bio gas and then run on diesel. The new headquarters just down the road from CMSA is going along full speed, and at our last meeting we approved the change orders. Hopefully we can have one of our NBWA meetings there in the spring.

Director Patterson: The report on Lake Berryessa is the same. There isn't the required curve conservation yet and but with the projected limited rain it will probably go into the first, and it's 5% conservation. So again, these are Federal rules, Federal curves, and how the dam is managed. So not too much has changed. I attended the Sacramento San Joaquin River Delta National Heritage area forum last night; the first one on the West Coast. We were sort of the star and Benecia and Vallejo are included in it in part because Benecia has national heritage sites and districts and that's what you needed. The delta does not have national heritage sites. It's also a connection with it's a geologic straight connecting the inland delta with the outward bay, which is the reverse of how things usually are. Last night was talking about where the management planning process is, and I thought what was most interesting were some of the panel discussions on writing about the Delta, and there's a brand new anthology that has just been published, and it's very affordable. It's \$34 and it's a by retired History Professor from Pacific University, Bob Benedetti, and the title is imagining the Sacramento, San Joaquin River Delta, and Anthology of Voices Across Centuries.

Director Bytof: We hired a sea level rise adaptation planner recently Kate Hagemann, who comes to us from Miami Beach and has a lot of experience there. We received a big grant from the Coastal Conservancy and a smaller grant from the Marin community foundation to start sea level rise adaptation planning in the canal neighborhood and to do it in an equitable way where we're actually helping fund positions at the canal alliance and multicultural Center of Marin to become sort of their in-house sea level rise expert staff planners. We can all work together collaboratively to try to identify some potential solutions and projects that we can do to help build more safety and resilience in the canal neighborhood in San Rafael. At some point I'll bring Kate to one of the meetings, and you'll get to meet her.

8. Announcements and Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am

Next Meeting: December 2, 2022, Zoom and in-person at TBD

SUBMITTED BY: Andy Rodgers, Executive Director, NBWA