

**SAN DIEGO RIVER CONSERVANCY (SDRC)**  
Minutes of January 5, 2012 Public Meeting

(Draft Minutes for Approval on March 1, 2012)

Governing Board Chairman, Ben Clay called the January 5, 2012 meeting of the San Diego River Conservancy to order at approximately 2:06 p.m.

## 1. Roll Call

### Members Present

Brent Eidson	Mayor, City of San Diego, Alternate Designee (arrived at 2:03 p.m.)
Dianne Jacob	Supervisor, County of San Diego, Second District
Lorie Zapf	Councilmember, City of San Diego, District 6 (arrived at 2:05 p.m.)
Bryan Cash	Natural Resources Agency, Alternate Designee (via phone)
Pedro Reyes	Department of Finance, Alternate Designee (via phone left at 2:04 p.m.)
Ronie Clark	Department of Parks and Recreation, Alternate Designee
Ben Clay, Chair	Public at Large
Ruth Hayward	Public at Large
Andrew Poat	Public at Large (arrived at 2:11 p.m.)
Ann Miller Haddad	Public at Large
Gary Strawn	San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
John Donnelly	Executive Director, Wildlife Conservation Board (via phone)

### Absent

Todd Gloria	Councilmember, City of San Diego District 3
-------------	---

### SDRC Staff Present

Michael Nelson	Executive Officer
Hayley Peterson	Deputy Attorney General
Julia Richards	Administrative Services Manager
Ann Van Leer	Consultant, San Diego River Conservancy

### Attendees

Mark Weston, Chuck Muse, Clay Phillips, Deanna Spehn, Robin Rierdan, Janis Shackelford, Robin Shifflet, Janice Downs, Jack Straw, Stephen Hill

## 2. Approval of Minutes

Ann Miller Haddad moved approval of the minutes for the November 3, 2011 public meeting. Ruth Hayward seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously adopted.

Pedro Reyes from the Department of Finance left the conference call at 2:04 p.m.

### 3. Public Comment

Any person may address the Governing Board at this time regarding any matter within the Board's authority. Presentations will be limited to three minutes for individuals and five minutes for representatives of organizations. Submission of information in writing is encouraged. The Board is prohibited by law from taking any action on matters that are discussed that are not on the agenda; no adverse conclusions should be drawn by the Board's not responding to such matters or public comments.

**Robin Rierdan**, Executive Director of Lakeside's River Park Conservancy (LRPC) reported that LRPC held a public meeting with citizens and property owners about properties located on Los Coches Creek and other drainages in Lakeside that had been inundated with invasive, non native plants. At the meeting she announced that if they were supportive LRPC and SDRC would consider preparing grant applications for funds to control Arundo infestations in their communities. She indicated that LRPC had partnered with the Fire Department and the Fire Safe Council and that more than 90 people expressed interest in becoming involved in the project.

### 4. Chairperson's and Governing Board Members' Report (INFORMATIONAL)

### 5. Deputy Attorney's General Report (INFORMATIONAL)

No Report.

### 6. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL / ACTION)

The following topics may be included in the Executive Officer's Report. The Board may take action regarding any of them:

- SDRC / SDRPF: Board of Director's Workshop
- SDRC/ SCC/DGS: Transfer of Administrative Services
- City of San Diego/ Carlton Oaks Golf Course: Proposed Sale / 68 acres
- State Conservancies Summit - December 6 & 7, 2011

**SDRC / SDRPF: Board of Director's Workshop:** The Executive Officer announced that he had encountered scheduling difficulties securing a date for the Workshop between the Governing Boards of SDRC and San Diego River Park Foundation Board Members, but was optimistic that it could occur during the first quarter of 2012.

**SDRC/ SCC/DGS: Transfer of Administrative Services:** The Executive Officer announced that DGS's Contracted Fiscal Services Unit had agreed to accept SDRC as a client and provide the Conservancy with bookkeeping, accounting, and personnel services. He said that State Coastal Conservancy and SDRC had agreed that the transition should happen between now and the end of the fiscal year.

**City of San Diego/ Carlton Oaks Golf Course: Proposed Sale / 68 acres:** The Executive Officer recalled that the proposed sale was the subject of considerable testimony at a hearing of the San Diego City Council's, Land Use and Housing Committee. He reported that the proposed sale had been tabled and was not on a current or future hearing docket. He advised that he had spoken with City of San Diego's Real Estate Assets Division and was informed that the City was presently negotiating a

Letter of Intent to Lease with TY Investments. He said that staff confirmed that the Land Use and Housing Committee's reluctance to pursue a sale until efforts to negotiate a lease had been fully explored had in fact, suspended consideration of a sale. He told the Board that he hoped that the easements TY had offered SDRC could be incorporated in the City's lease negotiations, particularly trail easements to the east and west of the City's property that would provide a linkage to Mast Park (Santee) and to West Hills Parkway at Mission Trails Regional Park.

**Ben Clay** said that that one of the key questions would be whether the SDRC Board members representing the City felt that it would be possible to include those trail easements as part of the lease negotiations.

**Dianne Jacob** suggested that a letter to the Committee or the appropriate official that be prepared which states that it is SDRC's understanding that the City is now considering a lease, not a sale of property to TY Investments and that the trail easements be included.

**Brent Eidson** said from the City of San Diego's perspective the trail and its completion is a high priority. He stated that he was not opposed to the letter Dianne Jacob was suggesting.

**Dianne Jacob** moved that: SDRC send a letter to the City of San Diego asking they give consideration to include the trail easements and that an informal communication precedes the correspondence. The motion was seconded by **Andrew Poat**.

**Gary Strawn** commented that he had concern regarding erosion issues along the berm and that access be provided to continue maintenance and monitoring for the SDSU, SDRC habitat improvement and invasives project.

**Michael Nelson** agreed and stated that there was no reason why the SDRC letter couldn't address these concerns.

The motion carried unanimously following a Roll Call vote. (9 ayes, 0 nays)

**State Conservancies Summit - December 6 & 7, 2011:** Michael Nelson said that he attended a conference of Executive Officer's of State Conservancies. He said the meeting discussed a wide array of issues: strategic plan preparation, procurement, general obligation bond funding, and budgets. He added that a general consensus was achieved that there could be benefits associated with Conservancies developing a unified position of major issues, rather than confronting them as separate organizations.

## **11. Department of Transportation: Auction / Former Old Town Office (INFORMATIONAL / ACTION)**

**Ben Clay** stated that following a quick briefing by the Executive Officer he would like the members in attendance from Sacramento to offer their thoughts and guidance on the auction and SDRC's role.

**Michael Nelson** said that when he posted the meeting agenda, he had intended to seek authorization the Board to pursue legal action if CalTrans continued to ignore or misinterpret SDRC's statutory

authority. He related that the Governor had asked the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which comprised 14 state agencies to engage in hopes of a more satisfactory resolution of the issue.

He said that he had been informed yesterday that the Governor's Office had directly intervened and that executives at CalTrans and State Parks were actively negotiating. Moreover, the Governor's Office had stipulated that an auction would not occur while the parties were negotiating and that there would not be a precipitous sale without consultation with stakeholders and SDRC.

The Executive Officer recalled that SDRC's intention was always to use its authority to make certain that a transfer of the 2 ½ acres to State Parks occurred. He stated that since State Parks and Caltrans were at the negotiation table with the strong encouragement from the Governor, he was no longer seeking authorization to initiate an aggressive legal strategy, but instead a motion to allow him to monitor developments leading up to the proposed auction. He advised that if there were new developments he would immediately confer with the Natural Resources Agency, SDRC's Chair, Vice Chair and the Deputy Attorney General regarding the necessity of a special SDRC meeting; or, the need to take some type of emergency action. He concluded his briefing by indicating that Bryan Cash and Ronie Clark were aware of these discussions and hoped they would comment.

**Ben Clay** asked Bryan Cash and Ronie Clark from Natural Resources to confirm the Executive Officer's account and add comments or guidance they felt was appropriate.

**Bryan Cash** confirmed the Executive Officer's statement and stated that the administration was working with the Natural Resources Agency and Caltrans through the Business, Transportation & Housing Agency. He said nothing would happen to the building and property without input from stakeholders and from the Conservancy. He emphasized that everything was still under discussion, but wanted to assure the Board aware that it would be involved in the final decision.

**Ben Clay** thanked Bryan for his update.

**Ruth Hayward** made a motion: **"that the Executive Officer monitor any developments in Sacramento, take necessary actions and call a special meeting, if possible"**. The motion was seconded by **Dianne Jacob**.

**Michael Nelson** said he had prepared draft language for the motion that was under consideration: **"the Executive Officer is directed to monitor any developments associated with the proposed auction of the Former Caltrans Office Complex in Old Town and review them with the Deputy Attorney General, the Natural Resources Agency and the Chair to determine whether a special meeting should be scheduled to seek approval to pursue legal action to protect SDRC's statutory responsibility and authority."**

**Andrew Poat** asked if anyone had been in contact with Caltrans.

**Michael Nelson** responded that following his third letter, Bruce April, Deputy Director of District 11 requested a meeting. He said a meeting was scheduled at which he reviewed SDRC's membership, expressed the serious concerns that the Board had raised about the proposed auction, and indicated that the Board was willing to consider using its statutory authority if those concerns and its standing were ignored.

**Ben Clay** said his sense was that the transaction was being negotiated by the executive branch and specifically between the Natural Resources Agency and Business, Transportation and Housing Agency. He suggested that SDRC should back away and let those negotiations take place. So, SDRC should return to the motion that had been made: “the Executive Officer is directed to monitor any developments associated with the proposed auction of the Former Caltrans Office Complex in Old Town and review them with the Deputy Attorney General, the Natural Resources Agency and the Chair to determine whether a special meeting should be scheduled.”

**Deanna Spehn** of Senator Kehoe’s office interjected that the Senator had been in regular communication with Laurie Berman, the District Director of CalTrans, who had gone out of her way to keep them informed. She said she was satisfied that lines of communications were open and working.

**Andrew Poat** asked if a number was presented to SDRC would it be in a position to respond.

**Michael Nelson** responded that SDRC would first establish a framework or methodology to consider whether to exercise its right of first refusal; a methodology that would be consistent with the Real Property Acquisition law; and because it involves a transfer of jurisdiction, the Departments of Finance and General Services would have to approve. He said he would also recommend that for SDRC’s due diligence utilized the review requirements of Department of General Services and Department of Finance for determining fair market value which would include title work, hazmat survey and other issues. He said SDRC’s due diligence would also include funding availability, which would involve reaching out to tribes, state agencies and other private and public funding sources.

**Andrew Poat** said that only a transaction will establish the true price and asked if SDRC was prepared to respond.

**Ben Clay** said to Andrew that he did not want to prejudge what SDRC we would be willing to do, particularly since SDRC members in Sacramento have told us they are trying to work it out. He said he felt it would be a mistake to discuss hypothetical situations.

**Hayley Peterson** said that if SDRC assumed that negotiations are not successful and an auction went forward and SDRC’s first right of refusal was recognized, Caltrans, when a bid was received would have an obligation to notify the Board. Under the pending motion, a special meeting could be scheduled consistent with a provision in Bagley-Keene for an expedited meeting. She said that the motion offered was broad enough that if an action by this Board between now and the auction date was necessary, a special meeting to present the facts as they exist could be scheduled.

**Andrew Poat** said he did not dispute Hayley’s statements. He then asked if SDRC was in a financial position to exercise right of first refusal in a specified time frame.

**Hayley Peterson** said the question is how much is the property worth. If the land’s value is \$2.5 million, the Executive Officer would say we are in a fine position. She said if someone bids a significantly larger amount, then the Board would be in a position to determine whether or not that amount is too much for SDRC to exercise its right of first refusal.

**Andrew Poat** said we need to know our financial capacity relative to this potential deal.

**Michael Nelson** stated that there is presently \$2.5 million that had been set aside by Department of Parks and Recreation for this purchase and that SDRC has about \$3.5 million available. So, SDRC could meet the minimum bid of \$4.5 million that CalTrans had established. He added that he felt SDRC not Caltrans had the authority to determine the manner by which SDRC would exercise its first right of refusal; and at a minimum would seek a review of the Caltrans appraisal and possibly procure its own.

**Ben Clay** suggested that SDRC should cross that bridge once the facts are known.

**Dianne Jacob** suggested that SDRC return to Ruth's motion and asked Ruth whether it was: **"the Executive Officer is directed to monitor any developments associated with the proposed auction of the Former Caltrans Office Complex in Old Town and review them with the Deputy Attorney General, the Natural Resources Agency and the Chair to determine whether a special meeting should be scheduled."**

**Ruth Hayward** responded affirmatively.

**Dianne Jacob** said that it was the motion that she had seconded and that it was still the motion on the floor.

**Ben Clay** stated that since there was a motion on the floor with a second that a Roll Call vote be conducted.

The motion carried unanimously. (9 ayes, 0 nays)

## 7. San Diego State University (INFORMATIONAL)

### Memorandum of Intent -Status

**Michael Nelson**, Executive Officer, will provide an update regarding the status of the Memorandum of Intent as well as the partnership's existing and proposed projects or programs.

### Watershed Data Collection and Restoration Program: San Diego RiverNet (Proposition 84 & Supplemental Environmental Project Grants)

**Matt Rahn**, Director of Research and Education College of Sciences

### Carlton Oaks: Invasive Control and Restoration (Proposition 40)

**Tom Zink**, Biology Department, Soil Ecology and Restoration Group

### San Diego River Research Center

**Matt Rahn**, Director of Research and Education College of Sciences

### Memorandum of Intent -Status

**Michael Nelson** recalled that SDRC had executed a Memorandum of Understanding with San Diego State University (SDSU). He said that since its signing a number of projects were underway. He said one was at Carlton Oaks Golf Course involving control of non-native invasives; and, another is a network of sensors that monitors water quality, know as San Diego RiverNet. He said that **Matt Rahn** will proved a brief update on the evolution of our partnership, and unfortunately, **Tom Zink** the

manager of the invasives project could not be present. The Executive Officer introduced Matt to discuss RiverNet as well as a recent conversation between various schools at the SDSU regarding the establishment of a San Diego Research Center.

### **Watershed Data Collection and Restoration Program: San Diego RiverNet**

**Matt Rahn** explained that SDSU had installed 4 stations in the lower portion of the watershed as a demonstration project to determine whether or not a real-time water quality monitoring platform would be able to relay that information via the internet to different computers and research; and, also to test the robustness of permanent sensor stations located within the watershed. He reported that the sensor stations are up and running and that SDSU has been working with YSI to update the technology and make the sensors more durable. He said that it was a big challenge in the San Diego River watershed because unlike most locations, the river dries up quite a bit, so there is this ephemeral nature which we must cope with that includes nutrients and algae growth on the sensors. He said that his team has installed copper plating systems that helps, but most importantly have finally reached a point where SDSU can conclude that the sensor network is sturdy enough to provide long term monitoring. He testified that the next step of the project was the development of a monitoring program for the entire watershed. He informed the Board that they have developed a 3-prong approach that involves working with students from the Departments of Geography, Physics and Environmental sciences to identify a protocol for placing sensors on maps in the watershed and their water quality monitoring role. He continued that presently this role and protocol is broken down in 3 categories: (1) land use type, (2) basic hydrology and (3) biological resources and natural areas. During the next couple of months data sets will be combined to see where the overlaps are in monitoring locations. This exercise should allow completion of a final report this summer regarding how long term monitoring co-exists with the existing priorities in the watershed.

### **San Diego River Research Center**

**Matt Rahn** said the concept of a Research Center occurred to SDSU staff several months ago while talking about the various projects SDSU was doing on San Diego River. He advised that some projects are handled through his office, others are with Tom Zink, and there are a number of smaller projects with students pursuing a Masters, PhD thesis or dissertation. He and the Executive Officer had discussed formalizing these opportunities into an actual research center with San Diego River as its focus. SDSU faculty, deans and others held a meeting at the end of the year which had generated considerable interest and a lot of traction to do something. He said he was also pleased to learn that SDRC's Chair, Ben Clay, had a conversation with President Hirschman about establishing a research center. He said he was confident this effort could build on the partnership formed four years ago with SDSU, SDRC and the San Diego River Park Foundation to engage in more focused research activities and to strengthen the partnership.

**Ben Clay** said since academic studies and research papers exist, the notion of a center that would make them available to local governments and non profits was very compelling. He stated that the ability to add this data to surveys, impact statement and permitting process should be valuable.

**Matt Rahn** emphasized that this was the aspect which makes the Center unique in its inception. He said quite often Universities do research for research's sake, but in this case the purpose is to help

identify, prioritize, and bring together those questions that are important to SDRC, the San Diego River Park Foundation and other regional partners and stakeholders. This would allow us to tie together student and faculty research projects or interests, identify funding sources and have something that is useful, not just a report on a shelf.

**Gary Strawn** commented that Matt Rahn's involvement along the river is very visible in his watershed monitoring working group. He asked whether the project will be able to monitor nutrients from the current sites.

**Matt Rahn** responded that the sensor stations are set up and have the ability to collect long term real-time data, but the system is somewhat constrained by the types of sensors. What is currently monitored are the basic physical and chemical parameters such as temperature, dissolved, pH, conductivity, salinity and so forth. He said that there are new sensors available that detect algae and that there is even a new optic sensor that uses different spectrums of light in the water to measure the quantity of algae. He said that sometimes the different data layers overlap and it is possible to get at the question of nutrient loading. Unfortunately, the nitrogen question is really expensive and really unreliable; but the platform as designed is flexible, so, as the technology improves we hope to be able to upgrade the sensors.

**Gary Strawn** asked is SDSU information available to the San Diego River Park Foundation (SDRPF) information and to the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board site.

**Matt Rahn** responded that they were not, but SDRC, SDRPF and SDSU are presently discussing how to link data up to the SDRC and SDRPF websites though EcoLayers.

## 8. San Diego River Coalition / 2012 Work Plan (INFORMATIONAL / ACTION)

### Presentation and Report

**Rob Hutsel**, Executive Director

**Michael Nelson** stated that for the last five years, SDRC has made it a practice to first receive a presentation and review the annual Work Plan of the San Diego River Coalition before assembling the SDRC Annual Work Plan. He said that he felt it was important that SDRC's Plan be informed by the recommendations of the Coalition. He advised that though the Coalition's criteria for setting priorities may differ from the Conservancy's, the goals and objectives of the Coalition and the Conservancy are shared as are the majority of its projects.

**Rob Hutsel** said that the San Diego River Coalition is an association more than 70 organizations chaired by The San Diego River Park Foundation. The Coalition is a forum that meets monthly and has been active since 2001. He stated that in November, the Coalition tries to adopt the Work Plan through consensus to ensure each project has been accepted by all participating groups.

He presented a PowerPoint that reviewed the Coalition's Work Plan which began by first identifying programmatic goals, project categories and project priorities:

### Program Goals

- Identify important projects which need to be completed to advance the vision of the San Diego River Park and to improve watershed health
- Identify regionally significant projects
- Promote collaboration and cohesion
- Raise awareness and attract funding

### Project Goals

- Acquisitions
- San Diego River Trail System
- Parks, Centers and Other Improvements
- Water Quality
- Habitat Restoration and Enhancement

### **San Diego River Trail System**

1. Hanson Pond: Construct multi-use trail from El Monte Road to Collwood \$2,000,000
2. Stadium to Fenton Parkway: Construct porous concrete trail to connect existing trail at Fenton Parkway Trolley Station to stadium parking lot \$600,000
3. Camino del Este Mid-Block Crossing: Construct mid-block crossing on south side of the river to connect existing trails. \$400,000
4. Mission Valley Greenway Crossing at Qualcomm Way: Construct trail crossing on south side of the river from existing trail to planned Discovery Center at Grant Park. Coordinate construction with construction of Grant Park project. \$1,754,000
5. Santee Trail: Construct .386 mile trail across County of San Diego owned property in Santee. \$313,000
6. West River Crossing: Construct trail bridge over river to connect existing east end of Estuary trail segment to Mission Valley YMCA/ Friars Road. This connects YMCA facility and Sefton Park as well as creates "return-trip" opportunity on north side of the river along existing trail network. \$1,000,000
7. El Capitan Reservoir Trail: This is for a feasibility study to create an Alpine community connection to proposed River Trail segment near El Capitan Reservoir boat ramp facilities and to explore trail to Conejos Creek along existing flume bench. \$100,000

**Category Cost \$6,167,000**

### **Habitat Restoration and Enhancement**

1. Estuary: Control Invasives through a volunteer-based program \$50,000
2. El Capitan Reservoir: Remove Arundo Donax from buffer around reservoir and establish control program to eliminate this emerging invasive plant population. \$75,000

**Category Cost \$125,000**

### **Water Quality**

1. Remove Trash and Debris: Support ongoing program to eliminate trash from the San Diego River through a coordinated volunteer program of surveys, monitoring and debris removal. \$75,000

**Category Cost \$75,000**

**Parks, Centers and other Improvements**

1. Old Town Center / Former Caltrans Headquarters: Work with Caltrans, State Parks and others to pursue acquisition of this facility. If successful, identify funding for a community design process. \$200,000
2. Discovery Center at Grant Park: Construct this 17 acre neighborhood park, eco-park and 7000 sq. foot community education center. \$6,300,000
3. Gateway Project – Murphy Canyon Road: Conduct a community design process for this City of San Diego property which can serve as a gateway to the River Park System. The project would be designed to be carried out by the community through donations and volunteer work. \$35,000

**Category Cost \$6,535,000**

**Total Cost Tier 1 Project Priorities (not including acquisitions)**

**\$ 6,167,000 San Diego River Trail System**  
**\$ 125,000 Habitat Restoration and Enhancement**  
**\$ 75,000 Water Quality**  
**\$ 6,535,000 Parks, Centers and Other Improvements (Discovery Center)**  
**\$12,902,000 TOTAL**

**9. San Diego River Gorge Trail: Cedar Creek Falls Permit and Parking Improvement Project (INFORMATIONAL)**

**Presentation and Report**

**Bjorn Fredrickson, Recreation and Lands Program Manager  
Palomar Ranger District, Cleveland National Forest**

**Bjorn Fredrickson**, Recreation and Lands Program Manager for the Palomar Ranger District provided an update and status of the Forest Service's decision to implement a closure of Cedar Creek Falls and the surrounding area including the trail and trailhead in July following a tragic incident. He reported that the closure was still in place and had given USFS an opportunity to put together a management plan for the area that would address its increased popularity and usage. USFS has formally proposed a management plan that includes establishing a visitor use permit and permit area in the vicinity of Cedar Creek Falls. The goal of the permit system is to limit the number of people who can access the falls on a daily basis. The plan's purpose is to dramatically reduce the number of visitors and limit impacts to the neighborhood and natural resources in the vicinity of the falls.

He said part of the proposal is to prohibit climbing on the cliffs around the falls, the consumption of alcohol at the falls, along the trail and at the trailhead. He further explained the USFS is also proposing some parking improvement projects up on Eagle Peak Road. The purpose of this recommendation is to deal with a number of health and safety issues that arise when visitation levels are high and people park on both sides of the road there are high levels of visitation and the people park on both sides of the road there; a situation that constrains emergency access. He said that they had conversations with the San Diego River Park Foundation about a short trail to the Eagle Peak Preserve. USFS are not anticipating that these improvements will attract attention.

**Ben Clay** asked what the homeowners' thought about the proposal.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** responded that the closest homeowner is a number of miles up the road and he thinks concerns related to visitation will be taken care of with the permit. He concluded that presently USFS is in the middle of a NEPA process which is required by federal law for any project USFS undertakes. USFS is preparing an Environmental Assessment which would take 4-6 months. He added that initial public comment period on the proposed action will close on January 12, 2012; USFS will post a draft EA and decision.

**Ben Clay** wondered after the federal environmental process concluded whether implementation of the management plan and access would resume in fall.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** answered that the best case scenario, assuming no litigation, was implementation would occur in late April or early May.

**Dianne Jacob** inquired about which year was he speaking.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** responded that he was speaking of this year, recognizing the importance of the project to the community, stakeholders and partners.

**Dianne Jacob** asked if the trail continue will to be closed until the measures have been implemented.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** responded affirmatively unless there are appeals or litigation.

**Ben Clay** asked what is going to happen.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** explained that the closure order expired and was extended until April 1, 2012. He testified that that this management plan is precedential, because USFS does not typically require visitor use permits in areas outside of the wilderness. This fact meant the review process had to go to all the way to the Regional Forester for approval, which cost them six weeks. So, prior to April 1, 2012 William Metz, the Forest Supervisor will make a decision. The three options are (1) extend the current closure until project is implemented, (2) let the closure expire and implement one or more smaller scale closures, such as closure of the trailhead facility, or (3) lift the closure entirely which obviously would not be a popular decision in the community and/or stakeholders.

**Ben Clay** asked where someone would go to secure a permit.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** responded it would be an online registration and a first come first serve reservation.

**Lorie Zapf** asked if how notification of the permit system would occur, because when she and her family went to visit the falls, they did not realize it was miles down a dusty road, nor would they have known that a permit was required.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** said USFS will communicate the establishment of permit system extensively as far and wide as they can.

**Lorie Zapf** asked if USFS will have police on site, whether enforcement would occur randomly, and whether visitors would be taking chances if they don't have a permit.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** answered that USFS will have enforcement, but not booths or staffed entry gates. He said USFS relies on targeted enforcement activities. USFS communicates with nearby communities to get a sense of when people are going in and out. He advised that USFS also had a great partnership with the County Sheriff. As an example, December 29, 2011 they heard that a big group went down to the falls, the Sheriff's helicopter flew over, advised that the area was closed and they needed to vacate. USFS law enforcement responded and issued 13 citations.

**Dianne Jacob** said that she appreciated the presentation and the plan looked good, but a critical component of implementation is enforcement, that without enforcement the components of the plan mean nothing. She asked if the neighbors in San Diego Country Estates been involved in this process.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** answered yes they have been involved, that Joan Friedlander had convened a number of dialog sessions with community leaders and stakeholders.

**Dianne Jacob** commented that communicating with the homeowners' association is crucial. She recalled that her first meeting with the community related to the River Gorge project was April 25, 2011. She said she wants to make sure the residents in that area are kept apprised of everything that is going on. She said would communicate directly with Mr. Metz that the trail stay closed until the management plan is implemented.

**Brent Eidson** commented he supports Supervisor Jacob's position on trail closing until there is a plan in place. He said that he had grown up in San Diego Country Estates and has witnessed a change in the visitors to the falls; it has become somewhat of a party atmosphere. He said he thought the alcohol ban was the most important component of new management plan. He asked whether there might be a chance in the future, if numbers of visitors declined to remove the permit requirement.

**Bjorn Fredrickson** said possibly, that one aspect of the plan is an adaptive management approach and it would review the number of permits issued and could determine when an increase or decrease might be considered. USFS wants to retain as much flexibility as possible to allow for continued public access if all is going well.

## 10. San Diego River Conservancy: Strategic Plan / 2012 -2017 (INFORMATIONAL/ ACTION)

### Status & Funding Constraints

Michael Nelson SDRC

### Scope of Work / 2012 -2017 Strategic Plan

Ann Miller Haddad

### Infrastructure Plan & Financial Strategy

Andrew Poat

**Ben Clay** recalled the history of SDRC's consideration of a 2012 -2017 Strategic Plan. He stated that he had asked Ann Miller Haddad to focus on the Strategic Plan and projects and asked Andrew Poat to develop a financial plan to fund it. He stated that he believed we should proceed with due diligence to draft a Strategic Plan. He continued by saying that it is important that the plan be prepared to reflect the objectives of partners, such as the Coalition, who just made presented their projects; but also and other entities and institutions to make certain our projects mesh. He also noted that it would provide an opportunity to do a performance review for the Executive Officer and a chance to learn what had been accomplished and what hadn't. He stated that he felt there had been sufficient discussion, so we should proceed with the preparation of a Strategic Plan and then take a look at our financial capabilities. He then asked the Executive Officer to brief the Board how he felt the process should proceed.

**Michael Nelson** reminded the Board that it had adopted Resolution (No: 11-04) which authorized the preparation of a Strategic Plan in consultation with the Project and Finance Committee Chairs, acknowledged that it would be funded by a combination of SDRC's operating budget and a grant approved by the State Coastal Conservancy that was suspended during the Bond freeze; and requested that a scope of work and cost estimate be prepared.

He said there had been numerous discussions with Andrew and Ann regarding how the exercise should proceed. He added that these discussion had led to a two step approach: the first step would use the operating budget to prepare a Strategic Plan, and the second step would utilize the State Coast Conservancy's grant to prepare an financing plan and capital assessment that could serve as a 5 year capital outlay or budget that would be required by the Department of Finance.

**Ben Clay** asked if there were any questions because he would like to entertain a motion.

**Andrew Poat** asked if the Chair to explain what would be the follow through. . . .

**Ben Clay** responded that the follow through would occur with a 2 stage process as presented to first develop a strategic plan and secondly to attach the numbers and a capital plan.

**Andrew Poat** directed the Board's attention to a document entitled "2012 Priority Setting Workshop", which he said outlined his thoughts on a process that he felt could work. He said he felt such a Workshop would represent an exciting opportunity to convene a gathering of people smarter than him that would leverage the great work that is already being done by a variety of other groups; a gathering, which would identify things at which we are best capable of doing and identify those and that we are

not. He remarked that his one page document was an attempt to begin to outline a process and some potential outcomes. He said that most people want to know what the outcomes are and recommended that everyone look at the Tier 1 projects listed in Rob's presentation.

**Ann Haddad** added she thinks it is very important that SDRC's process conduct an evaluation of the Strategic Plan that has guided SDRC for the last five years. She said the two step process that Ben referenced and had been discussed at length would provide SDRC with the ability to determine what we wanted to do, what we got done and what we couldn't do. She said it was clear that our documentation had been thought out and in close collaboration with Rob and other partners. She said SDRC does not work in a vacuum, so it was important to begin the strategic planning process right away.

**Andrew Poat** stated that he was concerned with over processing; people have already processed this stuff. He said that frankly, we are not the leaders in this activity and that there are lots of other folks who are, which is why he is anxious to reach out and to use the capacity of this organization to convene folks to leverage all the work that has been done. He continued that we must make sure we are all share the same priorities and assign responsibilities based on what each organization is best capable of contributing to those activities.

**Ben Clay** stated that the first step is to develop a plan that recognizes and addresses those questions. He agreed that there is no question that there is a lot of hard work being put in by an awful lot of folks. He said our process should acknowledge their contributions, but also look for funds to help them. He said he would like to have a motion to proceed with the strategic planning process, which would include Andrew's work and get down to the question of funding.

**Ann Haddad** moved that SDRC move forward with the strategic planning process and at the next meeting the board consider and discuss a draft outline of a strategic plan, which envisions a second step that includes the work necessary to develop a capital outlay and incorporate the priority setting workshop Andrew references in his document.

**Diane Jacob seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously following a Roll Call vote. (9 ayes, 0 nays)**

**Ben Clay** introduced Janis Shackelford, who had requested to speak on Agenda Item Number 8.

**Janis Shackelford** stated that she was appointed as a representative for the Lakeside Historical Society to the San Diego River Coalition and looked forward to working with the Coalition to implement the Work Plan and its priorities, particularly as they affect the community in Lakeside. She commented that as she looked at the proposed Priority Setting Workshop (Agenda Item 10) and its reference to non-governmental participants, she would like to see an equestrian coalition included.

She recalled that Rob Hutsel had mentioned briefly a paved pathway from El Monte to Ashwood. She said that the Board should be aware that the Bike Path at Ashwood was once an equestrian trail and the only safe equestrian route under Highway 67. She stated that the San Diego County Department of Public Works had promised the community it would be paved and would also include equestrian access. She said it did not have equestrian access and is only for bicycles and that there remains a

great deal of consternation within the Planning Group and the equestrian community, because equestrian ownership and businesses are very high in Lakeside.

Janis said that as a consequence when she hears of plans for connections through Santee, she wonders whether planning through Carlton Hills will be equestrian friendly or strictly a paved pathway suitable for bicycles, but not horses. She reminded the Board that Mission Trails Regional Park has an Equestrian Staging Area; Goodwin Ranch north of Santee had a tremendous trail system; Lakeside had good trails; but, Santee was in the middle. She expressed concerns whether connections could or would accommodate all users.

**Ben Clay** said he had asked Santee the same question, since the City of Santee was incorporated and there may be ordinances that preclude equestrians. He said he would now make certain he received a good answer.

**Gary Strawn** said that though he did not have all the data on Santee's trails, he knew that there were sections with an equestrian designation; so, he did not believe there was an issue with City ordinances. He said that he was aware that at Mast Park West, there were limits because it was an environmental restoration and mitigation site.

**Dianne Jacob** made a motion that **an equestrian representative be included as part of any group working on the SDRC's Strategic Plan and that it identify a line where to the west there is pavement and to the east multiuse that includes trails for horses.**

**Ben Clay** acknowledged the motion and asked if there was a second.

<<< The motion was seconded, but the motion's seconder was inaudible.>>>

**Ben Clay** asked that a Roll Call Vote be conducted. **The motion was approved unanimously. Roll Call vote. (9 ayes, 0 nays)**