



Minutes

Measure M2 Environmental Oversight Committee

Committee Members

*Chair Lori Donchak, Chairman
Melanie Schlotterbeck, Vice Chairman
Charles Baker, Caltrans District 12
David Mayer, CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Derek McGregor, DMc Engineering
Dan Silver, Endangered Habitats League
Anthony Villa, Taxpayers Oversight Comm.*

*Orange County Transportation Authority
600 South Main Street, Room 154
Orange, California
October 7, 2015 at 2:30 p.m.*

Members Absent

*Lisa Bartlett, OCTA Board of Directors
Dr. David Chapel, Brandman University
Veronica Li, US Army Corp of Engineers
Jonathan Snyder, US Fish & Wildlife
John Walsh, CA Wildlife Conserv. Board*

1. Welcome

Chairman Lori Donchak called the Environmental Oversight Committee (EOC) meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Lori Donchak led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of September 2, 2015 Minutes

Chairman Lori Donchak asked if there were any additions or corrections to the September 2, 2015 EOC minutes. A motion was made by Melanie Schlotterbeck, seconded by David Mayer, and passed unanimously to approve the September 2, 2015 meeting minutes as presented

4. Restoration Projects Update

Lesley Hill, OCTA, introduced Grace Adams, Executive Director, Bolsa Chica Conservancy, Harriet Weider Restoration Project.

Grace Adams gave an overview of the Harriet Weider Restoration Project. She reviewed the elements of the project and Consultant David Pryor commented on the technical portion of the project.

Derek McGregor asked if OCTA was part of the project just to secure the funding. David Mayer said part of the Natural Community Conservation Plan process is to give credit to OCTA for their funded restoration projects. This restoration project is particularly attractive because it includes restoration efforts for southern tarplant, which is an OCTA M2 NCCP/HCP Covered Species. In order to give OCTA mitigation credit for any of the restoration projects, a long term protection mechanism needs to be in place. This protection mechanism is preferred to be in the form of a conservation easement, but can also be in the form of a deed restriction. It is important for the Calif. Dept. of Fish & Wildlife to make their findings in issuing a permit saying that this conservation not only occurred, but that the restoration site will also will be protected in perpetuity.

Derek McGregor asked if the current property owners are open to this and are working with OCTA on the language. Grace Adams said yes, the privately held portion of the property has been offered to the County with an irrevocable offer of dedication. The current property owner does not see any issues related to providing a deed restriction. The problem has been working with O.C. Parks. Based on some personal issues and on some of the annex discussions with the city, this project has been held from moving forward.

Dan Silver said the bottom line is the project has been delayed because of the things mentioned previously. Grace Adams said yes. He asked if there were any issues related to spending funds and will they have enough money from the grant money to finish the project. Grace Adams said they have not touched the grant money.

Melanie Schlotterbeck asked if the restoration plan was in place now. Lesley Hill said the Wildlife Agencies are now comfortable with the existing restoration plan. The current issue is the land protection. They are not comfortable with the actual land protection instrument or the language.

Melanie Schlotterbeck said it feels uncomfortable and a little scary for her that nothing has happened. She would like to see some concrete plans on how they are going to be handled and maybe a timeframe. How long can we sit in the wings waiting for something to happen. Maybe there should be some type of backup plan with penalties involved if something has not happened by a certain date.

Chairman Lori Donchak suggested asking for a tight set of milestones for this project along with an action plan on how the milestones will be achieved.

Monte Ward suggested giving direction to staff to work with the applicant or sponsor and come back to the next EOC meeting with a game plan to get the project going and set timelines showing progress.

5. August 10, 2015 Inter-Agency Puma Regional Coordination Meeting

On August 10, 2015, the OCTA hosted an inter-agency puma coordination meeting to discuss measures to protect mountain lions. Dan Phu, OCTA, gave an update of the meeting. Monte Ward gave information on the role of the regulators, implementation efforts, potential funding mechanisms, and agency coordination.

6. Resource Management Plans Status

Lesley Hill, OCTA, gave a status update on the Resource Management Plans (RMPs). OCTA plans on releasing the RMPs for the Trabuco Canyon Preserves in November 2015. This release will include the Ferber Ranch, O'Neill Oaks, Hafen, Saddle Creek South and McPherson Preserves. Lesley Hill also went over the public outreach efforts for release of the RMPs.

7. Public Comments

Delma Johnson, resident of Trabuco Canyon, spoke in favor of the Puma protection program and supported the Puma migrations efforts. She also supported the rural residential properties in the canyon and said it would help large animal migration if the large development going in across from Whiting Ranch could be stopped.

Delma Johnson thanked OCTA for releasing the RMPs for Trabuco Canyon. They would like to support all of OCTA's efforts but right now the closure of certain trails within OCTA's properties is stifling the residents' ownership of horses.

8. Committee Member Reports

Dan Silver stated that he received a presentation on a property that OCTA may be interested in, called the Politiski Property. Dan Silver asked the property owner, Jim Sauls, if he wanted to speak about the property.

Jim Sauls, owner/representative, made a presentation on the Politiski Property in Trabuco Canyon.

9. Next Meeting – November 4, 2015

The next EOC meeting will be November 4, 2015 at 2:30 p.m.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.