



Minutes

Environmental Oversight Committee

Committee Members Present:

Chair Lori Donchak, Chairman
Melanie Schlotterbeck, Vice Chairman
Lisa Bartlett, OCTA Board of Directors (Absent)
Charles Baker, Caltrans, District 12
Dr. David Chapel, Brandman University (Absent)
Veronica Li, US Army Corps of Engineers
David Mayer, CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Derek McGregor, Public Member
Dan Silver, Endangered Habitats League
Jonathan Snyder, US Fish and Wildlife Service
John Walsh, CA Wildlife Conservation Board
Vacant, M2 Taxpayer Oversight Committee

*Orange County Transportation
Authority
600 South Main Street, Room 154
Orange, California
August 5, 2015 at 2:30 p.m.*

Guests

Spencer MacNeil, US Army Corps of Engineers
Penny Elia, Laguna Beach
Delma Johnson, Trabuco Canyon

1. Welcome

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Lori Donchak led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of May 6, 2015 minutes

Chair Lori Donchak asked if there were any additions or corrections to the May 6, 2015 EOC meeting minutes. A motion was made by Melanie Schlotterbeck, seconded by Derek McGregor, and passed unanimously to approve the May 6, 2015 EOC meeting minutes as presented.

4. Overview of M2 Program Army Corps of Engineers Permitting

Spencer MacNeil and Veronica Li from the Army Corps of Engineers reported on the work being prepared by OCTA and the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a programmatic permitting process that fits the M2 freeway program.

Discussion ensued regarding the accounting process for the amount of impacts that are being estimated during this stage in the process versus the amount of actual impacts that will occur as a result of the construction of the freeway projects. The Corps indicated that estimated impacts are based on a set of assumptions for the freeway projects which include direct as well as indirect impacts.

Discussions ensued regarding how the mechanism would work in relation to the amount of impacts that would result from the freeway projects and the amount of mitigation that will be required by the Corps.

An inquiry was made if there is an amendment process to add freeway projects, if additional funds were available. The Corps indicated yes, but they would need to go back out with another notice to provide interested parties an opportunity for input.

An inquiry was made if OCTA has met the required obligations with the work done on restoration project sites and acquisitions or is there more to do. The Corps indicated they are working with OCTA on the second round of restoration funding to determine if OCTA has provided sufficient mitigation. In addition, the Corps also indicated it would be challenging to retroactively include earlier funded projects since they were not involved in the selection process.

The Corps was asked the outlook for this process over the next 18 months, and they indicated the framework will be done by October 2015. OCTA staff indicated final steps to officially formalize the permit should be completed by the end of the calendar year.

5. NCCP/HCP and Draft EIR/EIS Update.

Dan Phu gave an update on the OCTA Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) and Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS). The public comments period concluded in February 2015. Staff is working with the wildlife agencies to finalize these documents which include responding to comments received related to the NCCP/HCP and Draft EIR/EIS.

Chair Lori Donchak asked how many comments were received. Dan Phu said approximately 40 comment letters. Each comment letter contained a number of comments. He indicated it is probably safe to say hundreds of individual comments were received.

6. Resource Management Plan Update

Lesley Hill gave an update of the Resource Management Plan. Staff anticipates the public release of separate Resource Management Plans (RMPs), for five Preserves within Trabuco and Silverado Canyons, to occur in summer/fall 2015. These five Preserves include: Ferber Ranch, Hafen, Saddle Creek South, O'Neill Oaks, and MacPherson. The RMPs will determine the appropriate management needs (consistent with the NCCP/HCP) for each of the Preserves. The remaining two properties (Hayashi and Aliso Canyon) will be released once biological surveys have been conducted and

will follow a similar process. As previously mentioned, all collected input related to public access is being considered in the development of the RMPs.

Chair Lori Donchak asked if the RMPs would go through the EOC before being released to the public. Dan Phu said yes. It will be handled similar to the Conservation Plan although it is not a requirement. All input related to public access is being considered in the development of the RMPs. Chair Lori Donchak said this will be of great interest to the OCTA Board because of the confusion on the Board of what recreational space is and what open space is.

Melanie Schlotterbeck said in terms of the feedback received from the focus groups she would like to commend OCTA for effectively managing the situation.

Public Comment: Penny Elia commented about:

- Laguna Beach is processing a permit with the California Coastal Commission for a fuel line in the area of the Aliso Canyon property.
- There is a strong push from the public for a Trail to the Sea.
- She anticipates the Coastal Commission and Sierra Club would not support such a trail.

7. Public Tours

Marissa Espino reported OCTA held a public hiking event at the Ferber Ranch Wilderness Preserve on Saturday May 30th as well as an equestrian ride on Saturday, June 6th. Staff is working on scheduling the next hike and ride scheduled for the fall. By the end of 2015 there will be a master calendar set for the year 2016 showing multiple hikes and rides.

8. Public Comments

Delma Johnson from Trabuco Canyon addressed the following issues:

- Trabuco's historic Foothill Trabuco Specific Plan
- Supporting the goals of the NCCP/HCP
- The local riding network

9. Committee Member Reports

Melanie Schlotterbeck indicated she works with a variety of non-profit organizations. She is working with Hills for Everyone in conducting a fire study of Chino Hills State Park. Since this study includes the Hayashi area, the information will be provided to OCTA, when completed. A second study covering the Santa Ana Mountains and the Laguna coast will also be provided. She agrees with Penny that fire agencies view habitat land differently than resource agencies, and this needs to be addressed.

10. Next Meeting – September 2, 2015

11. Adjournment