



**San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail
Implementation Meeting #5
December 4, 2012**

Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Project Management Team (PMT): Ann Buell, Steve Watanabe, Laura Thompson, Ellen Miramontes

Water Trail Staff: Galli Basson

Advisory Committee (AC): Tom Boone, Ted Choi, Lynn Cullivan, Bill Curry, Cheryl Essex, Cecily Harris, Jonathan Goldman (AC Alt), Jennifer Heroux, Carol Perry, Anne Rockwell (AC Alternate), Richard Skaff, Penny Wells, Brian Wiese

Stakeholder Group: Paul Nixon, Joy Dryden, Ellen Johnck, Ralph Mihan, Kevin Takei, Sally Barros, Amy Hutzal, Nancy Peake (phone), Greg Milano, Antoinette Romeo (phone)

Facilitation: Ariel Ambruster

Guests: Gilda Puente-Peters (GPPA Architects), Ed Frye (GPPA Architects), Mary Selkirk (Center for Collaborative Policy)

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Ann Buell welcomed the group. Introductions were made. Ariel reviewed the agenda.

Meeting Ground Rules

Ariel reviewed the ground rules for the meeting. Extended common conversational courtesies and other ground rule agreements to AC email interactions. Asked for input on any changes in the way the meetings are conducted. No comments were made.

1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, California 94612-2530
510•286•1015 Fax: 510•286•0470

Water Trail Year in Review and Looking to 2013

Major accomplishments and progress

Ann Buell took some time to acknowledge all that have been involved in the Water Trail. Acknowledged Bay Access for their vision, BCDC for their work on the plan, and the Center for Collaborative Policy for facilitation, Cal Boating and ABAG. Thanked Susanne von Rosenberg for assisting with the EIR. Thanked the Advisory Committee for their involvement at the meetings and between meetings, such as hosting the Coast Guard Station tour, thanks to Tom Boone. After one year, Galli Basson has served as the Water Trail Planner and much has been accomplished. Thanks to Ariel for her role in developing the Outreach, Education and Stewardship Program. The Water Trail now has a public face with a new website. Thank you to the East Bay Regional Park District, State Parks and City of Palo Alto for their participation in the designation process. Thanks to Amy Hutzler, Jack Judkins and the Conservancy Board of Directors for funding and support.

Catching up on accessibility planning

The designation process raised our awareness of accessibility. We have started a major effort to develop an accessibility plan for the Water Trail. GGPA Architects are working on this effort. There are challenges inherent in making the Water Trail program accessible as a whole, and this will be a part of our discussion today.

Opportunities for participation, designation, and grants in 2013

Designations will continue in the coming year with an extra bonus of the grant program. It will launch in February 2013. The grant program will be run and managed by ABAG and funded through the Coastal Conservancy. Half of the \$1 million will go towards the grant program and the bulk of funds will go to capital outlay projects. A small amount of funds will be set aside to help owners pay for signs required by BCDC as well as costs for BCDC permitting. Some funds may go to program support such as ETC (Environmental Traveling Companions). The maximum grant will be about \$75,000. Priority will be given to applicants that have matching funds to leverage state funds. Non-profits, public agencies and possibly private entities are eligible for funding. Sites that have been designated, conditionally designated, or those that request designation will be eligible to apply. Grants will only be awarded to sites that become part of the Water Trail. Improvements must be maintained for a minimum of 20 years. Applications will be reviewed two months after the Request for Proposals (RFP) is released. At that time, the decision-making process will take place. Parts of this process will be in a public forum. We will continue to receive applications until all funding is committed. In the future, there will be another grant round with funding from the Conservancy. The selection criteria are complicated, but a cash match will be prioritized. We will be identifying high-priority needs as we assess accessibility around the Bay Area.

Questions/comments about designation process and grant program

Richard Skaff – Thanked Conservancy for the grant program. This is the key to the success of the program. Will the Committee receive details about application? What are the criteria? Also, who will be on the panel? Will CalBoating be involved in providing matching funds?

Ann Buell – The selection criteria will be included in RFP. Decisions will be made by ABAG with input from the Project Management Team.

Richard Skaff – Can the Committee review the criteria before it goes out in the RFP?

Ann Buell – We are still working through this process.

Cecily Harris – Excited about the grant program. How can the Advisory Committee be involved in data collection?

Ann Buell – In defining a “meaningful experience” for the Water Trail program it depends on type of craft, etc. Need more fields in the database. Asking for volunteer help to collect more data.

Antoinette Romeo – Will the data be available for designated sites? It’s important to get feedback from Water Trail users and how effective our launch site is operating.

Ann Buell – not part of the original plan, but we would be happy to share data with Santa Clara County about Alviso Marina County Park. Website includes a full description of designated sites. Will work with site owners before information is posted.

Ralph Mihan – How will people find out about the grant once RFP is released?

Galli Basson – E-mail blast. Will post information on website on page for land owners. May have a workshop. Conservancy will post information, too.

Ellen Johnck – Has been encouraging clients to become part of the designated Water Trail. Identified two obstacles: 1) increase in liability insurance, for private launch operators and, 2) the permit process (Army Corps, Section 10) may need some efficiencies built in.

Ann Buell – Will need to address the liability and permit issues at a later time. Permit process can be addressed at a future meeting. BCDC can help provide an overview of the permit process.

Updates from Advisory Committee Members

Ann Buell – Since many members of the Advisory Committee are participating in events and programs around the bay, we welcome updates from you.

Jennifer Heroux – San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge recently broke ground on public access improvements at Cullinan Ranch, including a kayak launch.

Richard Skaff – Requested information about what the Cullinan Ranch site will look like, including pictures and plans of the site.

Richard Skaff – Pier 39 has received a permit from BCDC for a fully-accessible kayak and small boat docking facility that will be open to the public next year near the Aquarium. Includes storage and rental facilities. Hopefully will be complete before America's Cup 34.

Ellen Miramontes – Pier 39 sought an amendment to their BCDC permit. As part of the amendment, one of the requirements was to install an accessible launch. Has not seen proposed plans yet.

Cheryl Essex – Cal Boating (Dept. of Boating and Waterways) and CA State Parks will merge into one department on July 1, 2013. Details will play out soon.

Ellen Miramontes – BCDC met with Port of San Francisco late last week; Ann Buell and Paul Nixon have been involved. Current desire is not to complete a kayak launch site at Brannan Street Wharf. Instead, the Port is considering adding a low float dock at Pier 1.5, boat storage at Pier 40 and boat storage at Pier 52 where launches are currently located. Welcome comments from Committee. Launch at Brannan Street Wharf is not workable because of exposure to the south (wind-wave action). Looking for additional, perhaps better substitutes.

Lynne Cullivan – Alma boat will be participating in events next year as part of the “Year of the Bay” in 2013. Cooperative agreement with local theater group. Working with interpreters. Looking for ideas for plays near the waterfront. Also may direct youth sailing in traditional small boats.

Penny Wells – Bay Access has always promoted overnight accommodations along the bay. Every year, Bay Access sponsors a sojourn. This year, City of Napa allowed overnight camping at Kennedy Park. Also received access at Mare Island to a museum ship called the Mighty Midget, which is an LCS-123 or “landing craft support boat.” It is currently being restored.

Richard Skaff – Do not know these sites. Were either accessible to people with disabilities?

Penny Wells – Kennedy Park has accessible bathrooms. The landing craft at Mare Island is accessible if a person arrives by car, but there is no gangway from the landing craft down to the water. The ship does not have bathrooms. One may use nearby accessible office building facilities.

Paul Nixon – Water Trail concept began during discussions at Pier 70 years ago. There is a public meeting this Saturday about Crane Cove Park (Pier 70) and how human-powered

boating can be introduced. Ongoing heavy maintenance in nearby dry docks. Mix of recreational boats in a highly industrial area. Check the Port of San Francisco website.

Ralph Mihan – City of San Rafael has required developers to create two launch sites at Loch Lomond Marina. One will be a natural beach and another at a dock.

Richard Skaff – There have been some access issues at this marina. Will accessibility be dealt with as part of this process?

Ralph Mihan – Yes, accessibility is part of the development process.

Richard Skaff – Would like to stay involved in this project.

Accessibility and the Water Trail

Overview of the Accessibility Plan

Ann Buell – Gilda and Ed will be leading this section of the meeting until 11:30 with time for questions and discussion for 30 minutes. Ann provided a brief background on the project. CA deputy attorney general gave an overview of what programmatic accessibility means for the Water Trail. It was determined that a comprehensive plan was needed. We plan today to lay out the objectives of the plan, the process of developing plan, opportunities for your participation in development of plan, and how it will be implemented. The plan will be an informational, explanatory and guidance document. Not regulatory. We will circulate a draft to the Advisory Committee and work with the accessibility sub-committee. Implementation will be in concert with designation and the grant program. Accessibility Plan information also serves other goals of the Water Trail.

Gilda Puente-Peters and Ed Frye – Shared progress so far on the Water Trail Accessibility Plan. Here to get input from Committee and public as stakeholders in the plan. Started conducting overview of different sites to gather site-specific information. Data will be entered in Water Trail database and those sites that offer the most accessibility benefits will be highlighted. Then a plan of action will be developed.

Key parts of plan. Benefits of Water Trail program; description of types of boats, bay conditions; launch types; recommendations for improved access at identified site types; list known regional programs for people with disabilities; identify sites that currently have high potential for meaningful experience; phased approach for facility enhancements; summarize accessibility laws; provide guidance to site owners.

Programmatic accessibility. The WT program, when viewed in its entirety, should be accessible to persons with disabilities, with meaningful experiences provided for all [qualified persons], but without necessarily making all sites accessible. The Water Trail Accessibility Plan will provide guidance on how to achieve program-level accessibility for the Water Trail.

Data collection. Showed maps of sites they have visited: Oakland/Richmond. While on site visits look at public transportation points, sidewalks, parking areas, restrooms, drinking fountains, telephones, routes of travel to boat access point, transporting and launching boats, transfer methods for boats, other goods and services.

Types of disabilities. Mobility impairments; blind & visual disabilities; mental and cognitive; deaf & hearing impairments.

Why provide access. Approximately 20% of population has some level of disability; increasing aging population; access features benefit all users – children, people with temporary disabilities, reduced strength, reduced vision, etc.

Access Codes and Regulations. ADA Civil Rights; Unruh State Civil Rights; Title II Program Access; Title III Readily Achievable; 2010 ADAAG No Safe Harbor; State Code Issues.

Universal Design Principles. Use by all people to the greatest extent feasible. There are seven principles of good design.

Programmatic Access. Provide meaningful experience at various locations for a variety of boat types and users; information regarding the level of site accessibility, services and activities; assistive equipment for transfer into boats; effective methods of communication such as the website, brochure, signage.

What will the plan achieve? Strategic recommendations and a road map for achieving programmatic accessibility; better understanding of accessibility issues at the different site types; additional information for accessibility section of the website; complete Water Trail database with accessibility information and site-specific feature information; better understanding of the federal and state codes and regulation requirements.

Non-motorized small boat types. Eleven types of boats will be considered. Plan will keep in mind the different programs and ways access can be provided. Watercraft can be adapted for use by people of all abilities. Showed images of many ways to alter watercraft for use by people with access challenges. EZ Dock also shown.

NMSB Access Issues. 1) Getting to the launch site (parking, getting boat in water, wheelchair-mobility device, storage), 2) Transferring to the boat (how currently done, adaptive equipment, assistance needed), 3) Other considerations.

Discussion and Input

Ann Buell – take time for questions and answers. Asked Advisory Committee to share information about specific needs for different boat types. Jim McGrath providing notes on what windsurfers ideally needed. We'd like to start gathering information from you. Next week is the first meeting of the accessibility sub-committee.

Antoinette Romeo – asked team to consider whether agency already has accessibility plan where they may have already addressed these issues. Consider existing plans and policies.

Carol Perry – welcomes focus on accessibility for the program. The presentation was encouraging and exciting. She represents the visitor to Northern California and the Bay Area. Would like to see multi-lingual options. Not every site, but when there are, she can promote to guests from all over the world. If 20% of population has a disability, what percentage of the program do we anticipate being feasible and desirable for accessibility?

Ann Buell – Not starting out with a set percentage.

Gilda Puente-Peters – No set percentage. We are now understanding the scope of the entire bay and then will determine which sites in different geographic regions will be accessible [i.e., are currently accessible or could be made accessible]. The law requires dispersion in terms of geography, types of experience (urban, natural, amenities, overnight accommodations, difficulty, different boat types). Goal is to provide a variety of opportunities from those best sites in the network rather than a percentage. For multi-lingual options, the website could accommodate translations in different formats for some sites.

Richard Skaff – On the language issue, his understanding is that Google can translate a website into different languages using their translation system.

Gilda Puente-Peters – This is an option, but this service does not typically translate very well.

Brian Wiese – Two part question: 1) with the whole array of accessibility factors, how do you anticipate the plan aggregating and balancing these factors. Will you propose a numerical rating system? 2) How will the plan balance the individual site accessibility in relation to regional accessibility.

Gilda Puente-Peters – in the gathering phase, the more learned the better we can respond. Plan to classify the types of sites in categories of A, B, C sites based on current accessibility levels and how the site meets the accessibility factor list. More narrative rather than numerical rating/categorizing every site. Plan for a high level overview because the Conservancy does not own the sites.

Richard Skaff – 1) did not hear anything about opportunities for working with industries such as EZ Dock to develop new systems or modifications of existing systems, transfer, ramping, docking or beach systems. Look at existing systems that might be feasible and talk to manufacturers to develop new systems. 2) Public and private sites. Under ADA, both are required to do a transition self-evaluation plan. Wants transition plans to be part of the requirement to become a Water Trail site. 3) In the contract originally proposed with GGPA, the current scope is clearly only phase 1, and does not include a phase 2 review of every site around the bay. Did other members of the Advisory Committee receive the contract?

Gilda Puente-Peters – regarding additional research on systems, it is always a good idea to keep up with changing technology that can help us come up with more cost-effective solutions. This is outside the scope of her contract with the Conservancy.

Richard Skaff – requests Water Trail staff reach out to industries on this issue.

Ariel – Accessibility sub-committee will take up these issues.

Penny Wells – Add rowing sculls to list of boat types. If you did a poll of active athletes, you would probably find that “bionic” improvements are common in more than 20% of the population.

Lynn Cullivan – National Park Service (NPS) has a senior center in their park. Suggests reaching out to senior communities that may have specific needs.

Ted Choi – to understand each site, we should include a usage profile of the location. Frequency and seasonality of use, environmental issues. Determine why certain sites are the most popular.

Gilda Puente-Peters – usage is one of the key components in the analysis. Could be folded into the grant application review. Providing more opportunities to more people.

Cheryl – If input from specific groups is needed, send an e-mail to State Parks so they can forward to groups they are aware of to get feedback.

Gilda Puente-Peters – could develop a one-page questionnaire that can be e-mailed as a tool to gather this type of input.

Richard Mihan – State Parks has an excellent method for identifying amenities with symbols.

Gilda Puente-Peters – a graphic, user-friendly map that conveys this information clearly could be part of the website.

Greg Milano – his understanding is that if we can have enough sites to provide access for the program -- that is the goal. His understanding is that the Water Trail was originally conceived as a network of sites that are connected to each other. Has it changed to include only sites for day trips? [No, it has not changed. – Ann]

Gilda Puente-Peters – it is both. The closer sites are to each other, the safer it is for all users.

Richard Skaff – original concept that we have sites people can boat to. For example, from Sausalito to Angel Island and camping overnight. That means to him that accessible sites will need to be in both parts of the program.

Ann Buell – All original goals of Water Trail are still in place.

Water Trail Outreach Activities

Website – Review and Input

Galli Basson – Provided an overview of website status including recent pages that have been launched, new pages that will be posted and requests ideas from the Committee for future pages.

Recent pages that have been added. New page to Explore the Water Trail section – Types of Experiences. Overview of all the different experiences one can have on the Water Trail. Also added new page under Get Involved for volunteering. Water Trail stewardship program is not yet in place, so we list sample organizations that provide volunteer opportunities. Under Discover the Bay, three more pages on birds: Herons and Egrets, Western Burrowing Owl and Western Snowy Plover. Educational, ecological information on how to avoid disturbance. Added new page for Tidewater Boating Center. All three conditionally designated sites have information on the website. Will add to page for site owners information about the grant program. Accessibility page will also be added to.

New pages. Plan Your Trip, we will add a Leave No Trace Page – first Water Trail in the nation to adapt front country principles to a Water Trail. On Discover the Bay, plan to add wildlife species as well as wildlife laws that protect species in the bay. Also plan to add national and cultural features to the website. New page on the Bay Trail highlighting the *San Francisco Bay Shoreline Guide* and regional connection between the trails. Get Involved section, we will add a page on recreational programs. Have list of clubs now, we will add more programs sponsored by different agencies and organizations. As we conditionally designate more sites, we will add to the map page. Current map page is simple and we will grow out of it eventually. A long-term project will be to add a GIS-based map. Will bring back to the Committee for feedback and talk to water trail users. Working with Bay Area Open Space Council now on how to partner with other agencies on mapping. Want to create a photo gallery for each site. It would be helpful if we could create a gallery linked to each site, perhaps not scenic, but functional, such as photos of sites at low tide. Plan Your Trip, another long term project is a page for overnight accommodations and a guide to different areas showing what there is to see and do along the trail. Not an itinerary, but a guide to help them plan their trip, ties into tourism, will be looking for ideas. Personal safety, web-based training modules for Coast Guard will be adapted to the Water Trail audience, including channel markers, navigational safety and more education on safety. Water Trail Site Owners and Managers, new sub page could have design and launch details pointing people to the experts and existing guidelines. Will add new photos on an ongoing basis and will develop our newsletter where it can be directly signed up for on the home page to increase outreach.

Cheryl Essex – National Geographic Society Center for Sustainable Destinations has a good mapping model that could be used. Visitredwoodcoast.com is an example that allows user input, photos, descriptions, website, etc.; could provide a good link to other sites and illustrate how water trail connects to so many places.

Richard Skaff –requests that photos on website that show a specific section link to a section to find out more about accessibility. Site pictures should have information about that site linked to the photos.

Galli Basson – part of the accessibility plan will include new information that we can include in the website. Linking photos to specific pages is not technically feasible.

Ralph Mihan – Ridge Trail website has segment maps, could be a model for water trail.
Ridgetrail.org

Paul Nixon – Will you include how to get there by car, transit and by bike?

Galli Basson – Yes. Designated site pages have this information. Good idea to call out in more detail.

Brochure, Survey, and Sign Program Review

Galli Basson – provided an update on the brochure, sign program and 2012 survey results.

Brochure overall layout has been determined. We are finalizing the layout and photos now. Showed cover and opening pages. Includes information about the history and what you can do on the Water Trail. Orange sidebar is a way to feature the website, since brochure is limited by space. Includes accessibility notice. The education, outreach and stewardship program was used as a guideline. Full inside map, context to map and wildlife section. Three pieces – general information about how to avoid disturbances, photos of sensitive species called out in the EIR and information about them, graphic of buffer distances. Also includes Leave no Trace, safety and funding acknowledgment. Advisory Committee members interested in helping with final layout should contact Galli.

Identification Signs. Compared Water Trail sign with Bay Trail and BCDC signs in the field. Can include arrows for wayfinding.

Educational Signs. Now gathering information from the EIR, will develop suggested language for partners to include in the signs, would like input from Advisory Committee and partners, we are developing a template for use, or site owners can come up with their own signs and language that preserves messages required by the Water Trail. Showed templates and draft designs. Place for logo and other logos, website link, QR code, flexible grid system with themes including personal safety, wildlife, etc. Sizes will change. Buffer graphic could be used on the signs. Species could be changed.

Survey. Created in April 2012, received 523 responses, added 250 names to our e-mail list, results are available on the website. Display copies and a few copies are available to view.

Richard Skaff – requested that survey be sent to him.

Survey findings. People use multiple watercraft, prefer sites close to home, parking, restrooms and safe launching facilities are important, enthusiasm for Bay and Water Trail effort. Received site-specific improvement recommendations.

Galli will e-mail Advisory Committee with request for input on the sign program. Also let Galli know if interested in brochure finalization.

Interest in brochure finalization – Carol, Richard, Penny, Brian, Ted, Tom, Jennifer.

Richard – suggested that brochure discussion go through accessibility sub-committee.

Public comment

Gilda Puente-Peters – visual signs are regulated under the law. Should review with codes in mind, such as contrast and font size (5/8-inch high). Ensure signs are compliant.

Paul Nixon – concerned about parking in urban areas. There should be a way to accommodate limited parking for loading, unloading.

Ted Choi – consider an event section posting up-to-date events, tours, etc. Seasonal calendar of events.

Ann Buell – as Water Trail program grows, we are finding that the best help comes from people using the Water Trail. Those interested in volunteering, website, data collection, etc. should contact Galli.

Meetings for 2012 were set in advance. Ann will send another survey to set dates for 2013. Will do everything we can to accommodate schedules. Note, Bill Price will represent California Harbor Masters and Port Captains, taking the place of Ted Warburton. Joining Barbara Salzman in representing wildlife issues is Cat Burns, Executive Director of San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, taking the place of Jill Demurs.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.