



**San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail
Implementation Meeting #8
September 27, 2013**

Meeting Summary¹

Attendees:

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

Water Trail Staff: Galli Basson

Advisory Committee (AC): Penny Wells, Tom Boone, Cecily Harris, Bill Curry, Jennifer Heroux, Paul Nixon, Brian Wiese, Cat Burns, Carol Perry, Lynn Cullivan, Ted Choi

Stakeholder Group and Guests: Tim Gilbert, MIG; Ashley Tomerlin, MIG; Susanne von Rosenberg, GAIA Consulting, Inc.; David Fazio, Helix Opportunity and BAADS; Amy Hutzler, Coastal Conservancy; Anna Schneider, Coastal Conservancy; Paul Bergamaschi, East Bay Rowing Club; Nancy Peake, Marin County Parks (phone).

Facilitation: Ariel Ambruster, Center for Collaborative Policy

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Buell welcomed the group. Introductions were made. Ariel reviewed the agenda and ground rules.

Updates and Announcements from Project Management Team, Water Trail Staff, and Advisory Committee Members

Buell Reminded the group that today marks the two-year milestone for the Advisory Committee (AC) and expressed appreciation for the Committee's

¹ Bracketed sentences added by Buell for clarification or from flip chart notes.

dedication and contributions on behalf of the entire Project Management Team and staff. Buell invited all current AC members to continue on the committee and asked them to confirm before the December meeting. In the absence of explicit confirmation, Buell will assume that they will continue on. Buell also noted that she and Basson recently presented to the Marin County Parks and Recreation Commission regarding the potential Water Trail sites at McNears Beach (San Rafael), Paradise Beach (Tiburon), and Black Point (Novato). Next step is a Marin County Board of Supervisors resolution in support of the Water Trail. Expect McNears Beach to be reviewed by the Advisory Committee at the December meeting. Next week, Buell will be requesting an augmentation of the ABAG grant from the Conservancy Board of Directors.

- Basson Visited ten shops to encourage display of posters at the outfitters to help promote the Water Trail. Would like the Advisory Committee to help with outreach ideas. Coastal Clean-up Day was on September 21, and twelve kayakers came to the cleanup; all were members of BASK. The clean-up was held at Tidewater Boating Center, our first designated site. Basson shared photos illustrating the large amount trash collected, and expressed appreciation for the help of the East Bay Regional Park District, and also Bay Trail staff, who conducted a simultaneous land-based clean-up nearby.
- Watanabe Adjusting to merger with State Parks. Funded a dock expansion at Tidewater that is now in place.
- Miramontes Under the America's Cup permit, two launch enhancements were required: Pier 52 and the San Francisco Marina. Physical results are in place. San Francisco Marina "Easy Dock" has been installed, and Basson and BCDC are working on improving access to the dock. At the Napa Plant Site, near Green Island Road: A kayak launch is one of the requirements of the Department of Fish & Wildlife. Looking for suggestions on how to improve the existing ramp.
- Thompson Thanked Galli for organizing the joint Bay Trail and Water Trail Coastal Cleanup.
- Perry Announced that the America's Cup event was successful in getting images of San Francisco Bay throughout the world. Hoping to see an influx of visitors. Will feed Water Trail information to the marketing staff to help promote the project.
- Harris Requested that we find out more about the stand-up paddling community. Mentioned it would be good to know if there are any organized groups in the Bay Area.

- Fazio Was involved in commenting on the America's Cup plans and environmental review. Many of the suggested measures were implemented and many from the disabled community attended the event. It helps to highlight the interest from this community. The World Hansa Class will be hosted by BAADS next August (2014).
- Cullivan National Park Service was pleased with the turnout, and thinks the event helped people think about the parks and water in a different way. New exhibit at the Maritime Museum with big crowds.
- Nixon Looking at Aquatic Park and the Pier 52 areas and discussing safety. Spoke to the Port Commission about San Francisco having a history of recreational boating and industrial boating.
- Wells Cullinan Ranch in the North Bay has created a kayak launch but at this time there is no water. In the future the pond will be flooded to provide this access.
- Hutzel *Explore the Coast* grant program will be brought to the Conservancy Board on October 3: 52 projects, \$1.3 million. Two projects of interest: Environmental Traveling Companion (ETC) programs and Berkeley Canoe Racing. Hope to have another round in the future. Conservancy staff went on outing with ETC and Orientation Center for the Blind. Very impressed with ETC leadership and value of the trip for all participants.

Trailhead Designation and Grant Consideration: Ferry Point

- Basson Provided an overview of a site designation and grant improvement at Ferry Point in Richmond. The 307-acre park has two beaches and many trails with parking and restrooms near one of the beaches. The total project cost is \$258,700 and the grant application is for \$102,700. The grant would include an accessible concrete ramp from the parking lot to the existing beach. The project also includes installation of an accessible restroom and outdoor shower and upgrades to accessible parking. In spring 2014 permits would be obtained and construction would begin in fall 2014.

Designation conditions:

- Water Trail identification sign,
- Water Trail educational sign includes messages about navigational safety, avoiding harbor seal haul-outs and heron/egret rookeries (with buffer distances), and directs users not to land in marshes, and
- Approval and completion of the Water Trail grant.

- Curry Is this a 130-foot ramp or a launching ramp? It is a ramp.
- Burns Have done a good job of identifying wildlife issues associated with the site. Signage will be very important. Can provide feedback on the language. Important to keep seasonality in mind. Audubon Canyon Ranch has been monitoring heron/egret rookeries and there may be a role for them in this project.
- Basson Signage will be added to the site indicating that Brooks Island is off-limits to boaters.
- Nixon Is there swimming in the area?
- Basson The closest area is Keller Beach.
- Miramontes What is the texture of the ramp for slip resistance? How will it be maintained for sand and algae build-up?
- Wiese It will be grooved or brushed concrete, has not been designed yet. The ramp will not be extended into the water because of algae build-up. There will be regular maintenance of the area by East Bay Regional Park District staff.
- Miramontes The connection to Boat Ramp Street launch takes you through the shipping channels. There could be synergy between these two sites. Will there be specific directions to kayakers?
- Wells Since both sites exist and are used, kayakers currently make these connections and it is a highlight of the area. Does not think it is a safety issue.
- Wiese If you paddle east to Shimada Park you are following the edge of the Rosie the Riveter National Historic Park.
- Boone It is a regulated navigational area and a busy port. There are restrictions on smaller vessels in the channel. Once you put into the water, the kayaker will be in the navigational channel. Could post Rule #9 about smaller vessels not impeding larger vessels. Ships make a sharp turn towards the port.
- Wells Suggests having the ramp designed so people can avoid the things that wash in on a daily basis.
- Burns How do we make sure that information about all these issues that vary site to site are available to people using the site? A one-page list of

considerations [for each site, easy to print, maybe pdf] could be a good resource on the website.

Heroux The Water Trail signage can only do so much. Public agencies often need to go above and beyond the signage to convey messages. Some sites will not experience a large increase in use, and others may create an entire new user group. On a site-by-site basis we may not be capturing the impacts. Do we have a sense at this site how much more use it will get? What else beyond signs can the land manager provide, such as an educational program?

Basson The Park District will place new interpretive signs on site and we can work together on the key messages that can be worked into their program.

Wiese We are pre-mitigating these considerations through this process.

Heroux USFWS can introduce interactive programs at sites that become designated Water Trail sites. [New guided tours in Newark?] We are formalizing this site so we may want to have this conversation if we think the use will increase significantly.

Burns These questions are difficult to answer. We can only provide recommendations and be prepared going forward based on what happens. This is an adaptive management approach.

Harris The possibility of guided tours is a terrific idea, where possible.

Wiese The District is considering this site as a launch to Brooks Island.

Harris Consider volunteers.

Cullivan Programs would be great for this site, perhaps involving the National Park Service.

Basson We are just getting started with applying our education program. Many of these ideas will develop as the Water Trail program develops.

Choi Are there winds, currents and tidal surges here?

Wells At Ferry Point, there is often “bumpy water.” Kayakers will experience some water turbulence.

Nixon The weather can change here. Windy to the north and calmer to the south.

- Miramontes Could have an informal call to the public about the site. Sites that are designated can come back to the group for consideration of additional measures if needed.
- Wiese Great idea. Explore the idea of Twitter and social media. Could follow to see what people are saying.
- Miramontes Question about the accessibility details.
- Wiese It will meet ADA standards with a gentle slope and slight curve with 5% max.
- Curry Suggests not calling it a ramp because it is a walkway.
- Gilbert Could refer to it as a “beach access route,” per the final Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines issued by the U.S. Access Board on September 26.
- Fazio It seems like a launch ramp. It is futile to build down to the water because people can get stuck in the sand. Suggests a dirt path or a rubber mat. Concerned about the shipping channels, remote from other sites. Think carefully about expending these funds.
- Wiese We have a site that is now a sand beach. We have not yet arrived at how each site can be improved. It is currently a gap, so this project improves what is there now. We are trying to make improvements.
- Fazio Suggests a collaborative effort. There are other ways to achieve the same goal. Concrete can be hazardous.
- Curry Recommends the term “soil” or “sand” instead of “dirt.”
- Buell It is difficult to find the perfect solution for all boat types and site users with different disabilities. Beneficial Designs has documented the benefit of concrete paths and stable surfaces. It could serve a large number of people, including those with sight limitations, the elderly, and people with strollers, as a few examples. It is a good improvement over what now exists.
- Fazio ADA improvements need to provide benefits to the disabled community. We will encounter this throughout the program. This path does not go all the way down to the water. What is the purpose of this pathway? Has not seen anything like this before.
- Basson National Center for Accessibility did a study about beach surfaces. Came up with ten different surfaces. A lot of thought was put into this project to

make it usable for the largest number of people. They arrived at the best solution for the beach to get people out there and maintain it year round.

Miramontes Combination approach could solve some of these concerns. Since there will be more maintenance required at the site, could the path transition to the beach mat at the end? It does raise maintenance questions, but could be explored.

Wiese Mats, modular plastic and wooden platforms require a great deal more maintenance [and may be stolen]. This is one of the reasons the District opted for a permanent solution.

Wells Every day the route to the beach is different. A “Mobi Mat” may be destroyed by debris. A path to the mean high tide line could be beneficial.

Curry Access Board just released new guidelines. Rubber mats with gravel on top. There are a lot of design considerations.

Nixon Weather changes are relevant here. Safety is an issue here so this site is an important refuge.

Heroux Is this the first site we’ve considered that is a beach launch? Beach launches are desired, and she supports this designation recommendation to the PMT.

~BREAK~

Wiese The District looked at a wide variety of different designs for this location. The module systems take a lot of management. Park management and design staff overrode because of issues at Crown Beach. After vetting the ideas and conducting site visits, the recommendation was the hard structure.

Fazio Not opposed to this project, just recommends looking closer at the details.

Burns Supports the site, but sounds like more details need to be discussed. Asked for more direction about what AC is being asked to do. Great opportunities, but with issues like wildlife, safety, and accessibility.

Basson Designation is for the site with the proposed improvements: beach access route, parking improvements, outdoor shower, signs and additional interpretive.

Burns Language should be corrected to walkway. Not consensus on the material.

- Harris Recommend designation subject to continued conversations about the walkway. All the other features make this a great site. Are you looking for two separate designations?
- Buell Asking for guidance on the designation and the grant application [as a package]. The exact materials of the walkway may not be up for debate because the application is for concrete.
- Choi Supports approval of designation. For safety reasons we need all the access sites we can get. Water Trail is more effective with many points. When you don't have a good design, more money is spent on maintenance.
- Wells Supports designation, especially the bathrooms. The site is heavily used by kayakers and this is a safer access proposal.
- Boone Supports designation for the same reasons as Wells. Education and outreach is important.
- Cullivan Supports designation. Asked that the District provide reasons for selecting this design.
- Curry Don't want to create something that ignores safety. Provide a facility that puts people on the bay with awareness of what is around the users.
- Ambruster All are supportive of the designation conditions.

Project Management Team

- Buell Supports the designation.
- Watanabe Supports the designation. Emphasizes the stable nature of concrete.
- Miramontes Capture circling back in the future to assess the site. Same discussion of the physical improvements. Questions about the grooves, curves, etc and how they work. [BCDC will review the design in more detail].
- Thompson Supports the designation. Confident in the Park District staff. We have committed to bringing projects back to the Advisory Committee in the future for discussion.
- Buell When sites are officially designated, that starts the annual review of sites.
- Ambruster Emphasized the adaptive management approach.

Water Trail Accessibility Plan Update

- Gilbert A sub-committee meeting was held on September 17, with several new members in attendance. There was a good discussion about the accessibility survey. This survey looks specifically for information from those in the disabled community with experience or interest in issues related to non-motorized small boating access. Survey will be ready for distribution in about two weeks. A site visit was held looking at good examples of places that have been constructed, from a user perspective. Started with Pier 40. The importance of boat storage was emphasized. Also visited Pier 52, with an opportunity to look at and use the Port's recent installation of a transfer system. Participants provided some feedback on modifications that could be made to improve access. Questionnaire distribution: announcement will be mailed to all organizations that manage small boat access areas, will attend the Regatta in Sausalito, will also put it on the Water Trail website, distribute to outfitters.
- Fazio Suggested sending the survey to the entire disability community, not limited to just boating organizations.
- Harris Suggested sending to City and County accessibility coordinators.
- [Other] Suggested State Independent Living Council, Department of Rehabilitation, Ed Roberts Campus, County Commissions on Disability, Whole Access (Redwood City)
- Bergamaschi Send to the East Bay Rowing Club, which includes some sight-impaired rowers.
- Gilbert Still working towards a March/April 2014 release of the accessibility plan.
- Wiese Noted that site visits could be opportunities for designers and planners to learn more.
- Fazio Accessible boat design has been covered to some extent at BAADS.

Launch of New Phase: Final Trailhead Designations

- Buell Putting a spotlight on progress and milestones. In a couple of weeks, Alviso Marina County Park will have a ribbon cutting at *Day on the Bay* on October 13. This is a new phase for the Water Trail where we will begin to keep track of the sites that have been fully designated and bring any issues back to the

Advisory Committee for consideration and discussion. At the December meeting, we will talk more about what this annual review would entail. There are now five sites that have been conditionally designated.

Basson Introduced the final education sign design. Thanked the Advisory Community for feedback on the signs. Balanced different needs and comments. Moved safety messages to the top, added a bullet, tried to reduce text, added photo credits onto the photos, decided not to list more websites, but instead will rely on Water Trail website. Faced with the challenge of balancing consistency and site specificity.

Also introduced the expanded educational sign, where a specific component of the site is added to the baseline sign. This gives us some consistency and flexibility.

Choi What is the life expectancy of the sign?

Basson Will be meeting with consultants to select sign material.

Miramontes Add bullet points after “Enjoy viewing wildlife and help protect it.” Also separate the logos giving them more space between each other.

Basson Minor changes are still possible.

Harris Check the DFW website address to be sure it has not changed.

Wells “Dress for the swim” is the motto. Good to remind people that they could be swimming in very cold water and to dress appropriately.

[Other] [Different boaters wear or don’t wear certain gear]. [A variety of personal floatation devices are used by various boaters]. [“Dress for the ride,” “dress for the trip” suggested].

Wiese Allow space for a local manager sticker.

Fazio Black font is difficult to read. Keep it clean, simple, informative.

Watanabe “Wear insulating gear and a personal flotation device – use “life jacket” instead?

Boone Using the term “life jacket” may be better.

Watanabe Will check the standards.

[Other] [Small font at bottom may be hard to read.]

Basson *Day on the Bay*, Sunday, October 13 hosted by Santa Clara County and Supervisor Dave Cortese. There will be an unveiling of the new signs.

The new Bay Trail webmap will be used as a basemap for the Water Trail map. The interactive map will have basic information about the site with a clickable map. It will put us in a better position for applying for National Water Trail designation.

Public Comment

Fazio Reiterated that he is not against the concrete ramp. Added that it is expensive. The ramp itself does not make the site accessible. Emphasizes collaboration.

Buell Beaches are difficult to make accessible. Each beach has its own challenge. It merits a lot of exploration and developing unique solutions.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Thanks to Thompson for taking notes during the meeting.