



**San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail  
Implementation Meeting #15  
September 11, 2015**

**Meeting Summary**

**Attendees:**

<i>Project Management Team (PMT)</i>	Ellen Miramontes, Laura Thompson, Dick Wayman, Jared Zucker (by phone)
<i>Water Trail Staff</i>	Ben Botkin
<i>Advisory Committee (AC)</i>	Ted Choi, Lynn Cullum, Joy Dryden, Jennifer Heroux, Wendy Proctor, Kevin Takei, Penny Wells
<i>Stakeholder Group and Guests:</i>	Bo Barnes (Kayaks Unlimited, Bay Access), David Fielder (San Francisco Board Sailing Association), Maureen Gaffney (ABAG), Paul Kamen (Berkeley Parks and Waterfront Commission, Bay Access, Berkeley Racing Canoe Center), Jim McGrath (San Francisco Board Sailing Association, BCDC), Ralph Mihan (City of San Rafael Park and Recreation Committee), Roger Miller (City of Berkeley), Larry Moss (Berkeley Marina), Joel Peters (BASK), Tania Solé (by phone), Susanne von Rosenberg (GAIA)
<i>Facilitation</i>	Ariel Ambruster, Center for Collaborative Policy

**Key Outcomes**

**Trailhead Designations**

- Berkeley Marina Small Boat Launch/South Sailing Basin - Advisory Committee consensus guidance in support of designation; conditionally designated by Project Management Team.
- Berkeley Marina Ramp – Advisory Committee consensus guidance in support of designation; conditionally designated by Project Management Team.
- Islais Creek, San Francisco – Advisory Committee consensus guidance in support of designation; conditionally designated by Project Management Team.

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## Detailed Meeting Minutes

### **Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review**

The meeting started with introductions by the attendees and an overview of the agenda and ground rules. The meeting had a slightly different format than previous meetings, focusing on consideration of three proposed site designations.

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

Ben Botkin provided an update on the sites that Water Trail staff is continuing to work on. These include the Petaluma Small Craft Center (PSCC), Cass Ridley boat launch, Point Isabel, Coyote Point, Glen Cove Marina in Vallejo, and the Jim Hench Memorial Kayak Launch. Everyone is welcome to attend any scheduled site visits.

Water Trail staff hopes to bring the PSCC up for consideration in December. The CEQA work is almost done, and the PSCC will also be submitting a grant application. Cass Ridley has hit some snags. The assessment of Point Isabel is just getting started; a field visit is scheduled for later in September.

At Coyote Point, work on the East Promenade is in the planning process; the site visit is scheduled for December 10. There will be a planning meeting in October. Glen Cove Marina just contacted Ben; the site visit is scheduled for October 1. The site is not in the Water Trail Plan. The Jim Hench Memorial Kayak Launch was dedicated on August 23. Due to vast the area encompassed by the Water Trail it's very important for Water Trail staff to get everyone's input on opportunities for site designation and grant suggestions.

Water Trail staff is working with Bay Nature Magazine on another article on the Water Trail. They recently joined in a paddle from Islais Creek. Ben is also working on a video for Islais Creek which will be ready soon.

### **Project Management Team Updates:**

- BCDC: Two recently issued permits for Loch Lomond Marina and Blu Harbor (which was formerly Pete's Harbor) already have requirements for NMSB access. In the permitting process are Treasure Island, Richmond Ferry Terminal Richmond Shea Homes, Vallejo Marine Terminal and Alameda Boatworks. The Vallejo Marine Terminal is still working out public access plans. Richmond Shea Homes recently completed a Bay Trail segment and is planning a small ramp for nonmotorized small boats (NMSBs). Richmond Ferry Terminal would like to meet with the Water Trail group again to follow up on access issues. The City of Alameda is very enthusiastic about providing water access and Ellen Miramontes is encouraging them to come to a Water Trail meeting for input.

- The Department of Boating and Waterways has hired an administrative manager for its administrative unit. This will hopefully give Jared Zucker more time to focus on the Water Trail.
- ABAG is updating the website for the Bay Trail. The work will have a similar look to the Water Trail website.

#### Advisory Committee Updates:

- There will be a public breach event at Bair Island this winter, and the Refuge will also reopen the full trail. The restoration is progressing well, lots of wildlife. The South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Draft EIS/R is in public review, and comments are due by September 22.
- EBRPD started the first major park improvement project at Miller-Knox Regional Shoreline. They are replacing all toilets with ADA accessible ones. The work includes a portion of work at Ferry Point - constructing 4 accessible toilets, a shower, and boat washing area. A planned concrete path to the beach is not part of this project.
- The Port of San Francisco is working on final construction drawings for Crane Cove Park. Deadlines related to funding are coming up; the Port would like to do an update to the group, but may not be able to wait until the December Water Trail meeting.
- Bay Access has talked with Napa County Parks and Open Space District and the Open Space District is considering allowing kayak camping at Kennedy Park. EBRPD is running its first overnight kayaking camping trip from Big Break to Brannan Island State Recreation Area. The Jim Hench Memorial Kayak Launch consists of a ramp into the river directly under the First Street bridge. There is only on-street parking.
- Starting September 1, kids in the fourth grade are all eligible for a free one-year national parks pass. Kids can bring up to three adults with them. The program is called All Kids into the Parks.

There were no public updates.

#### Tracking Use of Water Trail Sites

Tracking use of Water Trail sites is becoming increasingly important, but data are very hard to come by. Water Trail staff would like to start some type of data collection process. It's important to do that now as the Water Trail is starting up and will become even more important in the future. Staff are looking for subcommittee volunteers to discuss how to get baseline data, and involve volunteers, site managers/owners, and maybe students and interns in the effort. Jared Zucker, Ted Choi and Jennifer Heroux volunteered. There needs to be a

focus on methodology - active versus passive, how to make it scientific, and what kind of data should be gathered and why.

At Islais Creek, Kayaks Unlimited is checking boaters in and out, tracking how many folks are in a given party, where they're going, and what they're doing. Ted Choi also has some data. Jennifer Heroux pointed out that there are many trail use models. They are intended for terrestrial trails but can be adapted, and focus on statistical sampling to predict trail use. The Maine Islands Trails had a full tracking system years ago.

### **Trailhead Designation Consideration**

(Note: The site descriptions for the three potential sites were included with the agenda for the meeting, available at <http://scc.ca.gov/2015/08/28/san-francisco-bay-area-water-trail-implementation-meeting-15-september-11-2015/>).

#### Berkeley Marina Small Boat Launch

Two sites at the Berkeley Marina were considered at the meeting. The small boat launch was discussed first, followed by the Berkeley Marina ramp.

There are multiple Water Trail sites near the Berkeley Marina. Two are within 1.5 miles, and three within about 3 to 4 miles. Shorebird Park adjacent to the small boat launch has a wide gravel beach which can get muddy at low tide.

The site has three docks, including one low freeboard dock, and port-a-potties. There are accessible bathrooms nearby with an accessible path of travel. The parking area is currently unpaved. Gangways can get steep at low tide, and a remnant of a former dock system (concrete humps) can obstruct the path of travel. Two organizations, Cal Adventures and the Berkeley Sailing Club are located at the site. The Bay Trail is nearby and there's good pedestrian access over a bridge over I-80 to Berkeley. A small paved parking area in front of the sailing club will be removed and the Bay Trail will come through that area. Boaters will still be able to unload cars (the area will be turned into a pull-through area).

Berkeley Sailing Club owns a large number of boats and rents them out. Cal Adventures is more focused on providing tours and guided activities. There are path of travel issues but improvements are in the works. There are no sites in the region that are broadly accessible, but Water Trail staff is hoping to work with the City of Berkeley to achieve that at this site. Proposed improvements are shown on the presentation for the site. The City is hoping to come back in December to be considered for a grant for an accessible ramp to the low-float dock.

There is a small amount of sensitive habitat in the area but no known endangered species are present there. The site is also within paddling distance of Brooks Island. Site designation conditions would be adding the standard signs.

Advisory Committee Questions and Comments: The site has a potential for conflict between the windsurfer rigging area and the parking area, but there will be a marked path of travel. The City

of Berkeley has done a great job on the design for restructuring the parking to accommodate the storm water treatment system and routing for cars in this area.

The site is also a great example of synergy between two organizations. In 1979 the Department of Boating and Waterways wanted to find an aquatic center in this area and "found" the Berkeley Sailing Club already present. They added a second aquatic center, rather than trying to force a choice. Having two organizations with some overlapping but also complementary services provides more choice to boaters, and the two organizations are able to provide mutual help. The lesson is that one shouldn't be afraid to have multiple clubs or commercial operators at a site.

It would be good to get rid of all the concrete humps to improve overall access. The facility is open to the public at all times. About 2/3 of the improvements (Phase 1) are fully funded. Paving of the western parking area and replacement of two gangways is not funded yet.

There are picnic benches, a grass lawn, and playground on the east side of the basin. It's a great family area.

The site has heavy use, and offers a lot of different activities aside from nonmotorized small boating. It has a protected launch area.

Advisory Committee Deliberations: The Advisory Committee unanimously voted to recommend site designation. Points made included:

- The site receives heavy use; it seems well thought out.
- Site seems pretty safe.
- There are no environmental impacts.
- The site would make multi-day trips feasible because the Berkeley Marina has a hotel.
- The site is one example of where the Water Trail could achieve its goal to make sites more accessible through enabling a site to become eligible for grant funding.
- Creating accessibility at this site seems more appropriate for NMSB users than trying to do something at the Berkeley Marina ramp.

There was considerable discussion about the possibility of allowing overnight camping. Issues raised were safety and abuse of any allowed camping. The City of Berkeley is not willing to take on the camping issue right now. East Bay Regional Park District has a group campsite at Point Pinole. The City has on very rare occasions made an exception and allowed camping near the Shorebird Nature Center. Bay Access is open to working with the City if the City has any interest in pursuing the possibility of allowing camping.

There were no specific suggestions from the Advisory Committee for customized language for the last part of the Water Trail sign.

The Advisory Committee reached consensus to support the conditional site designation with the designation conditions as proposed in the meeting materials.

Project Management Team (PMT) Deliberations: The PMT unanimously supported site designation. Points raised during the discussion were:

- It would be good to consider removing all of the humps, not just the one in front of the low freeboard dock.
- The City's involvement of the community makes it much easier for the PMT to designate the site.
- It's a great site, even if not perfect, and receives lots of use.
- There is an area with sensitive habitat near the site, but except at very high tides there's a lot of outboard mud and there's no interest in water access in those areas.

The Project Management Team decided in favor of conditional designation of the Berkeley Marina Small Boat Launch.

#### Berkeley Marina Ramp

This site has a different group of users than the Small Boat Launch site -- it's used primarily by trailered NMSBs such as whale boats and dragon boats; the ramp is also good for kayaks and stand up paddleboards.

The site has a good unloading area and car and trailer parking nearby. There is good accessible parking and accessible restroom and picnic area nearby, but the site is not broadly accessible. It has three high freeboard wooden docks along two concrete ramps. There's a \$15 fee to launch. There are also waste receptacles and a fish cleaning station. The parking area is also used for Cesar Chavez Park which is located immediately to the north.

It's important to consider this location in conjunction with the other site. The proposed designation conditions include the standard signs with a site-specific caution regarding the right-of-way for larger vessels and operating carefully in the marina.

#### Questions and Discussion:

The wooden docks were installed in 1995 and are expected to have at least another 20-year life. They are maintained regularly. The City has gotten questions about adding a low freeboard dock to one of the high freeboard docks. There are some small things that could be done to help increase the accessibility over the hinges and the wood. For example the hinges could be covered; the City will consider doing that. BORP (Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program) would love to see a separate gangway to a dock on the south side of the existing dock, and there is strong support at the City of Berkeley Waterfront Commission to create a more accessible facility; the City is considering the idea. The City could consider adding a low-freeboard dock to the marina dock, although it would have to deal with the fact that the marina dock is locked because people live on their boats. There is currently no restriction on the length of parking; it may be advisable to set up some sort of permit system for people who want to go out on multi-day trips. People would be willing to pay for such a permit. There's a carbon

footprint associate with NMSB use – people need to bring in boats on larger vehicles. The Water Trail should do more on boat storage. Because the City is already in the business of renting space at the marina to private owners it would be a great opportunity to add NMSB storage.

Advisory Committee Deliberations: The Advisory Committee unanimously recommended site designation. Discussion items were:

- It's important to consider the site in conjunction with the small boat launch.
- Is the additional proposed sign language really needed?
- Should consider adding language regarding the black oystercatchers nesting on the detached riprap breakwater.
- Burrowing owls that are also on the breakwater.

The Advisory Committee reached consensus to support the conditional site designation with the designation conditions as proposed in the meeting materials.

Project Management Team (PMT) Deliberations: The PMT unanimously supported site designation. Points raised during the discussion were:

- The City of Berkeley is encouraged to apply for a grant to help fix gaps on at least one ramp
- The City of Berkeley is encouraged to consider adding nonmotorized small boat storage.

The Project Management Team decided in favor of conditional designation of the Berkeley Marina Ramp.

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### Islais Creek

The site is located in Islais Creek Park. There's an accessible path of travel to the high freeboard dock. Joy Dryden recommended transfer steps at the dock to help increase accessibility. There are many nearby sites that also have accessible features. There is boat storage at the site which was recently expanded to increase capacity. The boat storage is run by Kayaks Unlimited. There's also an improved connection from the Bay Trail to Islais Creek Park. There are no restrooms, and people use the nearby firehouse restrooms. The fire house is very cooperative, but the facility is locked when the crew is out on calls. The park has an information kiosk, trash receptacles, and a picnic area. There's accessible parking nearby, and parking for the site consists of 18 spots by the adjacent substation.

Stewardship of the park is conducted by Kayaks Unlimited in partnership with the Port of San Francisco. Kayaks Unlimited gets free kayak storage in exchange for its work in the park. Kayaks Unlimited also runs programs to get people from the community out on the water. The Dragon

Boat Training Center shares space with Kayaks Unlimited and also does community events. The Dragon Boat Training Center is focused on high school and university age participants.

Improvements that are being considered at the site include a restroom (compost toilet), paving the path to the storage area to make it accessible, transfer steps, and adding a low freeboard dock attachment to the high freeboard dock. A possible donation of a low freeboard dock is in the works.

The lower part of Islais Creek is an active ship channel, and because the creek is so narrow, that can present a hazard to small boats.

The proposed designation conditions include the standard signage with a message specifically addressing the ship channel and safety around larger vessels.

#### Questions and Discussion:

Toilet: The compost toilet is compatible with the high use of the area. The same type of toilet was recently installed at Herons Head Park and is working well. The Port's maintenance division is recommending that this type of toilet be built elsewhere. The old BCDC permit for the site already includes a restroom. The goal is to have a restroom for the entire community not just Kayaks Unlimited. There would only be day use of the toilet. There is sufficient land to build a pit for the toilet. The Port has a maintenance contract for the restrooms at Herons Head Park, and the locks are on automatic timers. One alternative to a composting toilet, which may be burned down or broken into, is what the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service does: put in port-a-potties with privacy screens. They can easily be replaced.

Parking: Parking can be problematic during the week because it seems to be fully taken up by people who work at nearby office buildings. It's okay on weekends. The BCDC permit requires the parking spaces to be public, but BCDC is willing to accept reasonable restrictions. The Port or the Public Utilities Commission could request permission to put restrictions on the parking. The Port is working on improved parking signage so that the MTA can enforce parking restrictions. BCDC does not have the staff to enforce parking restrictions. Restricting parking hours could restrict kayak trips; consider allowing parking for 4 to 6 hours. The nearby Muni stop combined with storage at the site reduces the demand for parking. Parking signage could be added that this is parking for public shoreline access only. Discussion of parking restrictions was deferred to an off-line discussion.

#### Other comments included:

- The Port has seen a lot of improvement in the maintenance of the park since Kayaks Unlimited came in. There used to be a lot of illegal activity, including metal theft.
- Motorized boat use of the dock is prohibited.
- The gangway to the dock is wheelchair accessible, but completely inaccessible for people carrying boats because it includes a 180° turn. People launch from the gravel beach.



- The Kayaks Unlimited model is to provide storage at a place next to the water near public transportation, for cooperative boat use and to charge low fees.
- The Water Trail considers partnerships with local groups a big plus.
- Thought will have to be given to how to install vandalism-resistant signage (plastic, not metal, for example).
- The Port just received funding to remove abandoned piles all along the southern waterfront; the abandoned piles do not pose an obstacle at the site.
- The signage needs to warn about propwash from tugs and barges passing by the site/through the creek. Kayaks Unlimited advises boaters to stay out of the creek if a tug or barge is in transit.

Advisory Committee Deliberations: The Advisory Committee unanimously recommended site designation. Discussion items were:

- There is a strong interest in the installation of the toilet, and enhancing the accessibility of the sandy beach area.
- The Advisory Committee recognizes the benefit of storage.
- There are accessible features, but there are restrictions on boat access to the water.

The Advisory Committee reached consensus to support the conditional site designation with the designation conditions as proposed in the meeting materials.

Project Management Team (PMT) Deliberations: The PMT unanimously supported site designation.

The PMT echoed the Advisory Committee comments made regarding the toilet, accessibility of the beach, and the need for low freeboard dock as well as the need for additional safety signage.

The Project Management Team decided in favor of conditional designation of Islais Creek.

### General Public Comment

- The following comments were made during the public comment period:
- It's exciting to see three designations at one meeting. All the effort to create the Water Trail program was time well spent. Now the process flows well and really works.
- It would be a good idea to put information on the Water Trail website about available NMSB storage facilities.
- It would be great to see more interest in historic ships as Water Trail sites, because they can provide instant overnight accommodations without requiring complicated advance arrangements or reservations.
- European paddlers have a lot of programs to build the sport and bring people in. One idea might be to have races. Ted Choi would like to talk to clubs and other organizations

to build a youth racing program and other ways to bring in youth. Doing this kind of outreach would also result in more training and higher levels of safety.

- The outrigger club at Islais Creek has a \$5 membership fee for high school students and classes five days a week, and had races all last month.
- Water Trail staff has been trying to identify a good Water Trail anniversary date. There are multiple options including the date the legislation was enacted, the date that the EIR was finalized, or the anniversary date of the first site designation. It would be a great publicity opportunity. Everyone is encouraged to keep this idea in mind as we get close to the 5-year/10-year anniversary date. This month is the 10-year anniversary for the legislation. One possibility would be to have a race.

**Action Item:**

- Advisory Committee members should email Ben at [benb@abag.ca.gov](mailto:benb@abag.ca.gov) if interested in participating in the site use tracking subcommittee.

**Adjourn** - Meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

**Next Meeting** – The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9, 2015, at 10 a.m.