

**MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Climate Action Working Group
MCL Offices, Tamalpais Conference Room**

July 11, 2014
9:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m.

AGENDA

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

APPROVAL OF JUNE 6, 2014 MINUTES

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) Determine response to current form of AB 2145

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 1) Community Marin and sea level rise response coordination (Nona)
- 2) San Rafael Solar Policy (Bill)
- 3) Marin County Solar Ordinance (Bob or Bill)
- 4) MCL Solar Policy
- 5) Water efficiency program of MCE and coordinating those improvements with MMWD (Ed)
- 6) Campaign to “get in front of trends” so as to be proactive (Kiki)

INFORMATION ITEMS:

- 1) Marin Carbon project June 29 event (John and Judy)
- 2) Resilient Neighborhoods (Tamra)
- 3) Report on Rising Tides Event (Bill)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE
Climate Action Working Group: June 6, 2014
MCL offices, Mt. Tamalpais Conference Room

Present: Co-chairs Pam Reaves and Doug Wilson; also John Wick, Heather Furmidge, Bob Spofford, Ed Mainland, Tamra Peters, Cory Bytof, Bill Carney, Kiki LaPorta, Roger Roberts, Judy Teichman, Jana Haehl, Susan Robinson, Ken Drexler, Kate Powers.

Pam and Doug opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

This was the second meeting of **MCL's Climate Action Working Group (CAWG)**. What was discussed at the first meeting was how the group can approach the broad topic of climate change in a way that will focus on concrete, doable actions.

The format of CAWG will be a forum and will be an effort to pull the different groups that each attendee works with together to exchange ideas, to let each other know what's happening and of concern, and to coordinate and help each other accomplish their groups' goals as well as working together on projects.

Introductions of attendees including interests, groups each participates in and home location.

Pam would like one project of group to be creating a list of key point people in each jurisdiction..

Four presentations were made:

John Wick, cofounder of Marin Carbon Project. He conducted an experiment that asked if the management of rangeland systems could potentially increase the amount of carbon stored in soil?

Rangelands used for grazing are currently the largest cover type on Earth and have become a significant source of carbon emissions. Marin Carbon Project found that by applying a topical amendment of manure or, better, compost to grasslands they can increase permanent significant soil carbon, apart from the carbon that is released into the atmosphere. The process also increases the amount of rainwater that becomes detained around plant roots, increasing soil moisture. There have been 14 peer review papers on this sequestration process. Also discovered was that additional permanent soil carbon is captured in subsequent years from the single initial application.

Two MCL tours at John's Nicasio native grass ranch will take place on June 29th. Dr. Jeff Creque will also be on hand to discuss the projects.

Bill Carney initiated a discussion about bill AB2145 that is now going to the CA Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee. (The bill sailed through the Assembly.)

The bill would reverse the roll out process for Community Choice Aggregation, used by Marin Clean Energy, and would likely prevent expansion of new CCAs throughout the State. It creates vulnerability to CCAs by requiring opting in versus opting out.

It's being presented as a pro-Labor bill and is supported by the IBEW branch at PG&E.

An Energy Committee hearing is expected in June. Effort is needed to stop the bill there. If it passes through the Energy Committee it will go to the Environmental Quality Committee, then the Appropriations Committee before reaching the Senate Floor.

A campaign against the bill is urging organizations to show up in person at Energy Committee hearing and to go on record as opposing the bill. www.no2145.org has talking points and a list of opposing organizations. Latest info on hearing and bill will be on No2145 website.

It was stated that MCL supported the establishment of Marin Energy Authority. It was expressed that MCL should step up and move quickly to support continuation of CCAs on present basis by opposing bill.

ACTION ITEM: Roger moved CAWG send a draft MCL letter stating continuation of its support of CCAs and opposing AB2145 to MCL Board for approval as quickly as possible. Kiki seconded. All were in favor.

It was suggested that the letter be sent to Senator Padilla, chair of the Energy Committee and to ask the Senator to send to all members of the Energy Committee. It was suggested that MCL additionally send copies to Energy Committee members and their staff. Ed will send staff names to Pam. Send alert to MCL members. Doug will write draft letter and Roger will review. Heather will mobilize Main Street Moms.

Also, it was suggested member groups of CAWG sign MCL's letter.

Bob Spofford, Update on County Solar Ordinance.

Recent history: Green Point Nursery Solar project was passed by the County Planning Commission, then Board of Supervisors voted it down in August 2013. Since then, Supervisor Katie Rice convened a group, which included some members of MCL Board, in an attempt to find common ground among those divided about solar panels on agricultural lands. Recently, Sonoma County implemented an ordinance in their planning regulations using overlay zoning. The fact that the environmental community in Marin is divided on the issue is making it especially difficult. The Cooley/Porter project is the next project that will be evaluated.

Some expressed that MCL's position on solar is outdated and obstructive. It was stated that MCL takes into account aesthetics and habitat, also whether it is consistent with neighborhood planning processes. Different sites have different problems.

ACTION ITEM: It was suggested that MCL review its existing policy taking into account previous objections to it, and that MCL update its policy including input from those with varying viewpoints in the environmental community. A subcommittee was formed.

CAWG's next meeting agenda to include time for reviewing an updated Draft of policy. Prior to meeting, distribute text of existing policy with minutes from this meeting, and Nona's notes on the biological services component.

The County Planning Commission will host a site visit at the Cooley Quarry on Monday, June 9, where the new solar energy facility is proposed. The Cooley Quarry project will be on the Planning Commission's agenda on Monday, June 23.

Doug Wilson introduced a discussion on Community Marin and putting Climate Change planning into action.

Community Marin document was discussed. The document was produced by environmental organizations, including MCL, to help local jurisdictions have access to a consensus on environmentally responsible planning when updating their General Plans and Climate Change Action Plans. It also provides the environmental groups that produced it an agreed policy position that allows those groups to act quickly on issues.

However, Sierra Club-Marin Group has recently pulled out.

Discussion about whether CAWG should pick up the climate change aspect and, with boots on the ground, provide environmental guidance when jurisdictions are redoing their Plans and budgets to make sure climate change action is on their agendas. Different jurisdictions may need different tactics. Doug passed around the sheet for the meeting's attendees to write down a contact he or she can work with in his or her jurisdiction. It was proposed that a subcommittee of CAWG work on a template of questions to be filled in by electeds and staff on climate issues and actions and resources jurisdictions have allotted for these, including info on budget cycles and General Plan cycles. Then a public forum for sharing actions would be planned.

The additional intention of this effort would be to create accountability and to force budget mechanisms that will make implementation of CCAPs possible. Also important is building grassroots citizen action. San Rafael is good example with both budget commitment and grassroots implementation.

It was expressed that smaller cities don't have staff available to do the work that this template may require. And in these cases emergency response neighbors may be the groups who do the grassroots climate action.

Other related discussion: In County of Marin, Health and Human Services has largest budget of all the departments. Public health is becoming tied to climate change. Messaging from public health departments could help.

Cory Bytof, Sustainability/Volunteer coordinator of San Rafael, reported that Marin Climate Energy Partnership (MCEP), marinclimate.org, is a collection of staff members from each Marin city who are working on implementing City climate action plans. Soon MCEP will have report cards and best practices. Sausalito, Corte Madera and the County are still working on CCAPs. All other jurisdictions have them. MCEP's work could be assessment tool for CAWG. MCEP is contemplating how it will be a connector spot for all the projects that are happening including for sea level rise. MCEP is funded by \$2,000 of dues from each city. With that money, they pay a part-time sustainability coordinator. Also that small pot of money enables the group to leverage grants to help smaller cities fund CCAPs. Cory Bytof is the chair of the county MCEP monthly meetings.

Most large new public works projects that are funded by bond measures have LEED certification requirements. Voters should insist now that they do.

Climate change impacts will now be one of components of CEQA review instead of being an added line item.

What's missing in Community Marin document is accountability. Maybe this group needs to take advantage of what is being done by MCEP, the assessment piece, and use it to activate the public in various jurisdictions so they are watch dogging their local government.

To move things forward significantly, need to focus on specific issues and what we want done. Sea level rise impacts may be next big project needing countywide coordination and solutions. Now that many CCAPs are in place, there is a great opportunity to marshall our collective resources to work with preserving shorelines in Marin creating living levees to adapt and mitigate sea level rise. Kate Sears has group that is inventorying shoreline in southern Marin, working with BCDC. The group is getting ready to share results with other cities; meshing that into countywide process. Marin County Council of Mayors and Councilmembers just formed a Sea Level Rise subcommittee also.

There is expertise in CAWG and individuals could provide help informally by assessing Climate Change sections and project mitigations for staff or electeds as desired as part of its objectives.

ACTION ITEM: Bill will reach out to Leslie Aldon of Kate Sears Office. Subcommittee formed will transform Pam's original idea about coordinating jurisdictions on climate action to include ideas and groups organized around sea level rise and Marin County Energy Partnership.

Next meeting agenda topics: New draft of MCL Solar policy, Coordination of Jurisdictions on Climate Action issues

Possible future agenda: Energy and water efficiency of MCE

Subcommittees formed:

MCL Solar policy: Judy Teichman, Bob Spofford, Ed Mainland, Roger Roberts

Coordinating Jurisdictions on Climate Action: Bill Carney, Susan Robinson, Kiki LaPorta, Tamra Peters, Jana Haehl, Doug Wilson, Cory Bytof will be liaison between City of San Rafael and CAWG

Upcoming Events:

Marin Environment Housing Collaborative is hosting an informal cocktail party to bring people together to talk about affordable housing and transportation on Wednesday, June 25. Let Kiki know if you'd like an invitation.

2nd hearing on the Larkspur Station Area Plan on June 18 at 6:30 pm. The EIR on the Larkspur website has a Climate impact section that is interesting to read. It concludes there is a significant, unavoidable impact on the environment and there are no available mitigations.

Resilient Neighborhoods just finished up pilot program at Terra Linda High SEL students, churches, rotarys and businesses.

Three Novato events are coming up with North Redwood corridor and Transportation Oriented Design. Ed will send out emails to the group.

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Meeting adjourned 11:07 a.m.

Notes: KP