



## **General Meeting**

### **Quarterly Agency Meeting**

**September 25, 2008**

**Meeting Location:**

**4500 Glenwood Drive #F**

**Riverside, CA 92501**

**10:00 A.M.**

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Zembal called the meeting to order at 10:15 AM.

#### **II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Attendees: Gayle Holyoak - SJBRCD; Mandy Parkes - IERCD; Dick Zembal – OCWD; Bonnie Nash – OCWD; Vicki Long – EMARCD; Kerwin Russell – RCRC; Samantha Dempster – SAWA; Dolly Aguirre – SAWA; Sue Hoffman – SAWA; David McMichael – OCWD; Matt Talluto - MSHCP; Henry Armijo – SAWA; Terry Reeser – SAWA; Jill Coumoutso – SAWA; Brett Mills – SAWA; Allyson Beckman – SAWA; Bill Neill – Weed Management Area; Sara Jo Dickens – Cal-IPC Student Chapter; Rory Paster – OCPW; Michael Flores – CDFG; Adam Fischer – SARWQCB; Jeff Brandt – CDFG; Paul Webb – RPW; James Law – IERCD; Mary Grady – CDFG/Monitoring Program; Tim Romo – SAWA; Talula Barbee – OCWD – Giovanni Avechavaleta – SAWA; Autumn DeWoody – IE Waterkeeper & Jennette Corbitt – SAWA  
Absent: Jennifer Ares – IERCD; Hayley Lovan – USACE & Diana Ruiz – RCRC

#### **III. REVIEW, AMEND AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Director Long moved to approve the August 28, 2008 minutes. Director Holyoak seconded and the motion was passed with no objections.

#### **IV. CORRESPONDENCE**

Chairperson Zembal reported that SAWA received a response letter from Colonel Thomas Magness - USACE, informing SAWA that we will be included on the list of interested parties for managing the Santa Ana River Marsh property.

SAWA received a new mitigation project in the Santa Rosa Plateau / De Luz area (track 33324) for .1 acres of wetland habitat restoration. Additionally, the City of Corona inquired about a mitigation project at Stagecoach Park for .2 acres of restoration.

SAWA sent a letter of support to Joel Robinson, an interpreter for Santa Ana Park who landscaped his front yard with California natives and other drought tolerant plants. SAWA hopes to get the attention of the county supervisors in an attempt to offer incentives for water preservation.

#### **V. PARTNERING AGENCY REPORTS**

- a. Kerwin Russell – Santa Ana River & Orange County Weed Management Area (SAROCWMA)

Kerwin reported that SAROCWMA completed their annual report. Currently, the small efforts they are working on in the Inland Empire (including Orange County, Riverside County & San Bernardino County) have been graciously supported by SAWA. Bill Neill conducts much of the work on the weed management as well as other agencies, such as the San Bernardino Article of Commissioner's Office who has done some work in the Big Bear area and other volunteer work.

Bill Neill reported on new projects where he began to work on removing some castor bean between Featherly Park and Mission Inn. Now he has a key to the Riverside County Flood Control District where they removed some biomass about a year and a half ago, spraying with herbicide. Since the original application this area has mostly sprouted up with castor bean. Lastly, Bill reported that he is currently trying to renew his permit to work in the Green River Golf Course.

Kerwin Russell reported that SAROCWMA applied for both the baseline and supplemental funding from the State. They received the baseline funding beginning in January 2009, but were not granted the supplemental funding. Currently, SAROCWMA is working off of funding provided by SAWA. Chairperson Zembal informed Bill Neill that the Board approved renewing the Weed Management annual budget of \$10,000 including an increase of \$5,000 for 2009.

b. Adam Fischer – SARWQCB

There are two large projects approved by the cities of Chino and Ontario in which the certification went out for the preserve. For both projects they have to do bio assessments in Mill Creek in order to get some baseline data of the Creek. One already went out and the other one is expected to go out in the next week or so. Adam attended his first meeting with the Riverside area Special Area Management Plan (SAMP), which is the Corps new watershed approach. The County has insisted that if they support SAMP the Corps will provide a regional county general permit for projects. Basically they will get the State Board to issue certification for each project and the local staff will no longer be involved in the process.

The State Board is also working on a wetlands policy in which one of the items of discussion is coming up with a new definition for wetlands. The Regional Board staff and others have said they already have a definition that is in the policy. These are not the same individuals responsible for grant administration; however that staff is approving projects and not necessarily looking at environmental impacts.

The storm water permit is still in draft and he suspects the three separate drafts are being prepared or being reviewed by the city permittees and it depends on the county. There is still a lot of talk about doing LID local capture of storm water runoff. He reported that during the peak of the housing boom, they processed about 177 permits for the 401 certification and this year he thinks they will only process around 60.

**VI. SAWA PROJECT REPORTS**

a. Hayley Lovan – USACE

Absent

b. Kerwin Russell – Riverside-Corona RCD

RCRCD has started their turtle trapping at Lee Lake Pond, which consists of 3 acres. Currently there are turtles in the pond but they have been unsuccessful trapping them. There are only a couple areas where the pond turtles will come up to reproduce so they are more difficult to trap, but starting next week they are planning to put out more traps. They know they have a couple of sliders in the pond that they would like to remove and they have a couple of people who are willing to adopt them once they've been trapped.

Shelli Lamb, the RCRCD District Manager was able to get in touch with the contact for the Quino Checkerspot Butterfly breeding and RCRCD will be able to have a second population beginning next year.

There is still current activity with the fish projects including the suckers, dace and chub.

c. Vicki Long – Elsinore-Murrieta-Anza RCD

EMARCD is going to be able to purchase at least 40 acres with the funding that was donated to their district for corridor work. With the looming economy they are hoping to get two parcels instead of one.

Last night she attended a meeting with the City of Wildomar for a project they are partnering with Fish and Game on regarding riparian habitat. She needs to make it out to Elsinore, but has been working with the other cities.

They are working on the Santa Margarita watershed cleanup which starts on November 1<sup>st</sup> in Wildomar and will be partnering with Fish & Game and Code Enforcement in doing some monitoring and maintenance work.

EMARCD is signing a contract for an easement in the French Valley Area and are taking on a 250 acre area easement with the Fish & Game and the Army Corps. Vicki informed Kerwin that it is a butterfly habitat area and is available to him should he need more space for his butterflies.

Director Long reported that Dr. Matt Ron from San Diego State University has joined their district as an Associate Director.

Finally, they are still working with Trout Unlimited and continuing to try to get grants to hire a manager for their district.

d. Mandy Parkes – Inland Empire RCD

IERCD is currently working on two clean-ups they have scheduled. First, they are helping the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) coordinate a large scale volunteer based clean-up of the El Prado Road site in Chino - Located near the SAWA trailer on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Check-in will begin at 8:00 A.M. in the IEUA parking lot. Breakfast, lunch and refreshments will be provided along with raffle prizes. They invite everyone to participate in the clean-up; however, participants must be 16 years of age or older to volunteer in the clean-up due to IEUA's insurance coverage.

IERCD also organized their Agency clean-up that will take place on October 16<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. - Located in the area north of Chino-Corona Road, adjacent to Mill Creek in the city of Chino. All volunteers will receive lunch and refreshments, a tee-shirt and the chance to win prizes. If you are interested in coming, please RSVP to Amy Bonczewski at [Amy.Bonczewski@ca.nacd.net](mailto:Amy.Bonczewski@ca.nacd.net) or at 909.799.7407 extension 107.

James Law reported that the Mission arundo removal project expanded and will run from the east end of the landfill to the railroad bridge down at Jurupa. IERCD is working with Riverside County Parks on 50 acres mitigation for the north side and should begin work by the first of the year. Another project they are working on is the Santiago Oaks and the Santiago Creek, running from the dam to Tanon Street which consists of 20-30 acres of removal. Lastly, James reported on their San Timoteo project with the Tree of Heaven and Tree of Plateau. He hopes to get all of the landowner agreements completed so they can start the project before the breeding season.

e. Gayle Holyoak – San Jacinto RCD

Director Holyoak reported that Dennis sprayed 240 acres of tamarisk out at Mystic Lake and continues to conduct maintenance on the other projects.

She presented their districts Final Report for Agreement no.:06SF350186 - A Forage Crop Irrigation Demonstration Project (See attached).

f. Bonnie Nash – OCWD

Bonnie reported that part of OCWD's mitigation requirements are to help minimize exotics, so Brett put out 14 Mino traps in their ponds and caught approximately 1200 sunfish, 30 crayfish and a handful of mosquito fish within the first week. She was surprised at the low diversity of their results, but are planning to put out the remaining 36 traps that they purchased on a biweekly schedule. She found out from Kerwin that the mosquito fish are not attracted to the cat food they were using, so they are trying to find out what will entice them into the traps.

OCWD has an individual who is working on removing arundo for them at no cost whom has currently removed about an acre of free standing arundo in a place where he couldn't do any damage to the habitat. However, his equipment that he uses to remove the root mass is now under repair and he will return after two weeks to work on removing the root mass, which he will then take away to his greenway shop and see what he is able to do with it. Depending on his results, they will see if it is profitable enough for him to continue to remove the arundo.

Bill Neill requested that they look at how small he is grinding the root mass because they have never done the root before just the stalks, so they are planning to spread some out and water it to make sure they are not spreading arundo.

Chairperson Zembal had his junior college class out at Prado on Saturday to help with planting. The students had a good time and enjoyed being out in the wilderness for the day.

Finally, Bonnie reported on the River Walk that OCWD is hosting on Wednesday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. The volunteers will receive a packet of information with aerials and driving instructions and work in pairs, checking out the sub straight from La Cadena down to Hamner looking for potential sucker habitat. Chairperson Zembal reported that they are working on finding out a way to try to get some of the sediment out because they are concerned about losing habitat. The River Walk project will help document whether the area is still all under sand or perhaps there is some return of the gravel, etc. which all helps with potential sucker habitat.

Bill Neill questioned whether anyone knew about the plan to raise the River Road Bridge 20 feet. Bonnie responded that she was aware of surveyors out in the area and she had previously heard the work was scheduled to begin sometime in September. Kerwin told him he spoke with Riverside County Transportation last month and they are not expected to have completion until 2012. Bill reported that he received a call from the Orange County Conservation Corps regarding a mitigation requirement for arundo removal for that project and he expressed his concern that it was not a good foundation for a road approach to the bridge. Both Bill and Kerwin informed the project informants that they would have to get the roots out otherwise it would sprout back.

g. Tim Romo – SAWA

Tim began by thanking the executive committee for approving the purchase of a new trailer for his crew; they bought a 6x12 double axel trailer for restoration use.

The removal phase of the PAR project is once again underway. Removal efforts started Wednesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> and up to 20 acres have been removed thus far. He reported that spraying has also continued by RPW in the areas previously removed.

Bill Neill has been applying the herbicide Habitat in the Hole Creek area of the PAR project. He visited Hole Creek on September 16<sup>th</sup> and feels the treatment is very effective; however the dead arundo has increased over the year. Given the effectiveness of the herbicide Habitat, some of us at SAWA are concerned with the dead canes that remain standing. Since Bill has been treating arundo upstream of Hole Creek, he asked Bill's opinion on what to do with this area of the PAR project. Bill Neill reported that he originally began this project as an example to show that he could spray the area as treatment while not disturbing any of the habitats. He reported that he has only treated about 20% above the dam because it is a long process, consisting of more than 40 feet wide. He then has to wait until it dies out, losing its leaves and ultimately collapsing before he can go back for more treatment. He recommended using the long arm excavator to mulch up, but expressed his concern that it is not a good place to do hand work because of the steepness. Tim reported that he has spoken to Nature's Image and they don't have any concerns about removing in that area whether it is by hand or machine.

Chairperson Zembal questioned the process of running into any homeless people who have set up camp in the area. Bill informed him that he often runs into that problem and that for the most part the camps are temporary and he moves around them and returns to work on that area when they have moved. Additionally, he said that once the rain season begins they don't have a problem with the camps. Kerwin said they have had to call the police department in the past and the code enforcement will come out if needed and remove the camps.

Recently he sent out a work schedule that the SAWA crew will follow for spraying all of their sites for the balance of the year. He reported that they are right on schedule to make a full coverage of spraying by the end of the year. The sites they have visited this month are, San Timoteo, Temescal, Santiago Creek, SAR mainstem and the Prado HWY 71 project.

He discussed a plan to gather a large group of people to cut, chip and paint sprouting eucalyptus at Prado with Bonnie. The crew has sprayed over 1000 trees this far and hundreds of trees remain. Lastly, he reported that the areas that have been treated have new sprouts popping up and he plans to send out more details as they work out the project details.

h. Dolly Aguirre – SAWA Education Program

The education has been busy with the Water Discovery Program marketing. Many school districts within the watershed have approved the marketing strategy and letters are being sent to principals.

Water Discovery is starting to book field trip programs for 2009.

SAWA will continue to assist IERCD with their Vermont Parent University program.

This month, SAWA staff toured IEUA's Carbon Canyon Reclamation Plant. SAWA will be working with IEUA to create joint field trips and plant tours for students group over 100.

Next month, the education staff will be attending the Project Wet Facilitator Training in Silver on October 11<sup>th</sup> and the Ground Water Institute in Riverside on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. If anyone is interested in attending, please let her know. There is a \$30.00 fee that is refundable if you attend the workshop.

Event-wise, SAWA will be setting up booths at the IERCD's Chino Creek Cleanup on October 18<sup>th</sup>. The informational booths at the cleanup will be the kickoff for IEUA's restoration program. The education staff will also be presenting at the

upcoming Project Wet educator workshop and providing a tour of Chino Creek Park on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Dolly, the Education Coordinator has been working with both Project Wet and Flying Wild Coordinators to start pilot curriculum projects. Project Webfoot provided by Project Wet and Ducks Unlimited is a wetlands based curriculum whereas the Flying Wild curriculum focuses on migratory birds. Chairperson Zembal requested more details on her commitment regarding how many hours she expects to be involved between the two projects. She informed him that her commitment for Flying Wild consists of dealing with teachers, coordinating workshops for at least 200 educators per year for a timeframe of three years. She would be responsible for training the teachers who would be facilitating all of the workshops within SAWA's regional area, which would then make them a city partner within the national association.

Chairperson Zembal stated that the Board is very interested in approving the projects, but would like her to put together a rough budget of staff hours involved. Dolly expressed her concern about having it put on next month's executive board agenda. She would like to apply for the grants that are being sponsored by the Council of Environmental Education (The Flying Wild Program) that requires being a city partner, which has an application deadline before the next meeting.

Additionally, Dolly reported that she believed Project Webfoot is less of a commitment, consisting only of facilitating one workshop per year. Chairperson Zembal informed Dolly that the board can approve these projects before the next meeting if she provides the Board with an estimate of the staff hour commitment involved.

Samantha has been continuing her work with interpretive materials for the Interpretive Center.

SAWA has applied collaboratively with IEUA for the Habitat Conservation Fund Program this month. Application deadline is October 1<sup>st</sup>.

The first Regional Environmental Education Committee will be meeting today after the Agency meeting at 1pm in RCRC's board room.

- i. Ken Kietzer – DPR  
Absent

## **VII. SAWA / MSHCP BIOLOGIST REPORT**

- a. Matt Talluto – MSHCP Biologist  
The mammal work is still ongoing as well as their photo stations. As for the SKR trapping, this is their last week with SKR trapping in Wilson Valley and next week they will be moving up to Potrero in San Jacinto.

The Herps surveys are also still ongoing. They have had really good luck with the granite night lizard, which has been relatively easy to find.

Currently, working on mapping the cactus wren - found six cactus wrens in one spot down in Wilson Valley. Director Long requested to receive more information on the cactus wren as it is in her district.

They have a new monitoring Administrator, Mary Grady who said she was looking forward to working with us all.

- b. Sue Hoffman – Lead Biologist

1. It looks like we will break 500 in the vireo count this year but we need 538 to hit the mark of 1,000 vireos in the watershed. We are working on the report.
2. We monitored *Arundo* spraying at the Anza Narrows site. The *Arundo* removal project at Hidden Valley has begun again. We do not have a biologist there everyday because the end of the nesting season but we will spot check and be available if needed.
3. We are doing raptor surveys in Cajon, San Jacinto, and San Timoteo.
4. Herp arrays are open at Lake Perris one week a month. We trapped a SKR, closed down two arrays to prevent catching them again, and notified the US Fish & Wildlife Service. We are applying for permits to handle SKR. MSHCP biologists are participating in the herp surveys.
5. We are participating in some field work with MSCHP. Activities include vegetation surveys in Delhi Sand-loving Fly habitat, day and night herp surveys, and SKR trapping. Field work on the Cactus Wren, Burrowing Owls, and eagles in Chino Hills also continues. We are also planning on participating in turtle trapping at Temescal next week.
6. We are submitting Breeding Bird Surveys for 2005 and 2006 to the Institute for Bird Populations. We are completing the data work up for the 2008 winter and breeding season surveys.
7. We are working on the report for the Huntington Beach Least Tern colony.
8. We did a bird survey for the RCRCDC at Lee Lake Pond in Temescal. There was a local resident at the site with rifle and bows slung on his shoulder and we reported the trespassing to the RCRCDC. It is working on securing the site.
9. Brett, our biological technician, new to full time status at SAWA, is receiving training in the Education Program and will participate in the program as a docent. He is also helping on Tim's crew with invasive species removal, and at Prado with its exotic species removal program. He is working at the SAWA native fish stream and participates in recovery efforts for the chub, dace, and sucker. The work being reimbursed by the RCRCDC includes the 319 Sycamore Creek Grant, working on the RCD's Land Use Learning Center and the Butterfly rooms, habitat restoration, turtle trapping, and water quality testing at Dos Lagos.
10. We participated in the IEUA Reclamation Plant Tour. Thanks Dolly!
11. I attended a 3 day workshop in statistics in Sacramento last week given by Northwest Environmental Training Center. It was an excellent workshop and so we are planning to send some people to another of its workshops in Long Beach next month on Access.

## **VIII. BIOLOGIST PRESENTATION**

- a. Allyson Beckman – SAWA Biologist  
Allyson gave an overview of results of SAWA's 2004 Breeding Bird Surveys published in: Bird Populations 8: 136-148. The Institute For Bird Populations,

2007. She presented characteristics of sites surveyed in 2004 (Featherly Park, Prado, Mockingbird Canyon, San Timoteo Canyon) as well as methods used to map and determine number of territories at sites. Additionally, she discussed the most common species found at each plot as well as species of concern with breeding territories on sites.

**IX. OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Beginning next month, the Board approved to change the SAWA General Meeting location to SAWPA starting at 10:30 A.M.

**X. NEXT MEETING** - October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2008 (See attached for directions)

**XI. ADJOURN** - The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 A.M.

Please post 72 hours before meeting

---

Inland Empire RCD • Orange County Water District • Riverside-Corona RCD •  
San Jacinto Basin RCD • US Army Corps of Engineers