

SAN DIEGO UNIFIED PORT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 7, 2009

**To:** Board of Port Commissioners

**From:** David Merk  
Director, Environmental Services  
dmerk@portofsandiego.org

**Subject:** Summary - September 10, 2009, Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting

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The Environmental Advisory Committee met on September 10, 2009.

The following members, constituting a quorum, were in attendance: Commissioner Scott Peters (Committee Chair); Andrew McAllister, CA Center for Sustainable Energy; Bob Hoffman, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS); Bruce Reznik, San Diego Coastkeeper; Craig Anderson, Solar Turbines; Diane Takvorian, Environmental Health Coalition; Emily Young, San Diego Foundation; John Robertus, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB); Lorena Gonzalez, San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council AFL/CIO; Megan Johnson, CA Coastal Conservancy; and Mitch Perdue, U.S. Navy.

Port staff members present were: David Merk, Eileen Maher, Irene McCormack, Leslie FitzGerald, Kelly Falk, Michelle White, Kelly Makley, Cody Hooven, Katya Mishina, Darlene Nicandro, Paul Brown, Matt Valerio, Kristine Zortman, Brianna Martin, and Rachel Verhoeks (minutes).

Other interested parties in attendance were: Eric Chavez, NMFS; Keith Merkel and Robert Mooney, Merkel & Associates; Lee Wilson and Russ McCarthy, Northrop Grumman; Carolyn Lieberman, Lauren White and David Zoutendyk, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Laurie Walsh, RWQCB; Jim Peugh, San Diego Audubon Society; Catherine Miller, San Diego Sportfishing; Barry Snyder and Rolf Schottle, AMEC Earth & Environmental; Mo Husain, MH Systems; Stanley Maloy, SDSU; Tim Hushen, SDSU Research Foundation; Robert Patton, Zoological Society; Jonathon Hardy, Senator Ducheny's Office; Elizabeth Taylor, Brown & Winters; Chris Chase, Inter Ocean Systems; and Henry Pontarelli, Lisa Wise Consulting Inc.

The following members were absent: Commissioner Lee Burdick; Dr. Rick Gersberg, SDSU Coastal & Marine Institute; Laurie Black, LJ Black Consulting Group; and Patti Krebs, Industrial Environmental Association.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 am. The following is a summary of the meeting.

**Subject:** Summary - September 10, 2009, Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting

## **WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS:**

Commissioner Peters welcomed everyone. Jonathon Hardy of Senator Ducheny's Office expressed the Senator's support of the Commercial Fisheries Revitalization project.

Commissioner Peters updated the Committee on the recent solar installation that occurred at the Port Administration building. He also provided an update regarding the South Bay Power Plant, in which the state of California may require the plant to stay open past the end of its lease. Opinions can be expressed at the December RWQCB hearing.

## **ACTION ITEMS / DISCUSSION / COMMENTS:**

### **Input on Recommendations for Funding thru Environmental Fund-**

Eileen Maher gave a presentation regarding the latest Request for Proposals for projects to be considered for Environmental Funds. In addition to the six projects previously recommended, staff recommended an additional three projects be funded; one habitat restoration and two research and monitoring projects. These projects will be recommended for funding at the November 3, 2009, BPC meeting. Environmental Funds remaining (after the three projects) equal \$1.8 million. Committee members provided various input on proposed projects, including concern that the Committee is lacking clear focus or goals for efficient use of funds. Commissioner Peters requested staff draft something for review at the next meeting.

Commissioner Peters also updated the Committee on the status of funding for the Center for Bay and Coastal Research. The Committee previously allocated funding for the Center, but due to funding from another source, staff will need to decide how to reallocate funds originally awarded.

Commissioner Peters also reminded the Committee to check out the new San Diego Bay exhibit at the Birch Aquarium.

### **Bay Wildlife-**

Bob Hoffman, NMFS, gave a presentation entitled *Fishery Utilization of San Diego Bay*, in which he provided an overview of the bay's various fish studies and results that have been conducted over the years.

Kelly Falk, Port Real Estate, and Henry Pontarelli, Lisa Wise Consulting Inc., gave a presentation entitled *Commercial Fisheries Revitalization and Coastal Public Access Plan*. In it they provided an overview of the Commercial Fisheries Revitalization Study,

**Subject:** Summary – September 10, 2009, Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting

the process and timeline, and explained the need for the industry to be sustainable. There are plans to hold a public workshop at Driscoll's Wharf in November.

Eileen Maher gave a brief overview of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA). Specific areas will be designated into three levels (red, yellow, blue). Depending on the final areas designated, there could be potential impacts to the Port, its operations, and many stakeholders. Final comments are due by October 11, with a hearing in Long Beach October 20-22. The Department of Fish and Game will make the final determination of areas in December. The Committee reviewed and expressed concern over the Port's related comment letters. It was suggested the Port be more involved with MLPA taskforces and panels, and that a supplemental science-based letter be written to clarify the Port's position. Commissioner Peters stated the draft letter will be written and comments sought before the October 6 BPC meeting.

Robert Patton, Zoological Society, gave a presentation on the endangered birds around the bay, specifically the California Least Tern (CLT) and the Gull Bill Terns impact on the CLT.

Eric Chavez, NMFS, gave a presentation entitled *2008 San Diego Bay Eelgrass Inventory and Bathymetry Update*. This was an overview of the current condition of eelgrass in the bay and the unknown future of subtidal habitat.

Robert Mooney, Merkel & Associates Inc., gave a presentation entitled *Post-Dredging Recolonization Study*, in which he explained the process and results to determine the re-colonization times for marine species following a dredge event.

Due to a lack of time, Mitch Perdue, U.S. Navy, did not have the opportunity to present *San Diego Bay Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan*.

#### **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS:**

Remaining 2009 meeting dates and topics are: October 15 – Climate Change, and November 19 – Water Quality.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Coastal Cleanup Day is September 19, 2009, 9am-12pm. The Port sponsored site is the Chula Vista Wildlife Reserve.

Diane Takvorian inquired if a Climate Change Action Plan was ready for review. Staff indicated not at this time, but would be meeting with her to discuss.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 am.