

## MINUTES OF OCTOBER 30, 2003 LAKE MERCED TASK FORCE WATER COMMITTEE MEETING

The meeting was held at Dick Morten's home and started at approximately 3:00 PM.

The meeting was attended by committee members Dick Allen, Tim Colen, Jerry Cadagan, David Dawdy, Mondy Lariz, Dick Morten, John Plummer, Patrick Sweetland and Howard Strassner. Greg Bartow of the SFPUC sat in as Michael Carlin's alternate. As noted below, Patrick Sweetland and Greg Bartow abstained in the action adopting a water policy regarding Lake Merced.

A. Selection of Water Committee Chair. M/S and carried that Jerry Cadagan is selected as Chair of the Water Committee.

B. Presentation regarding pilot Vista Grande stormwater project. Patrick Sweetland described the pilot Vista Grande stormwater project. A small portion (10 cubic feet per second) of stormwater flow from the Vista Grande canal that has been processed through the installed Continuous Deflection System (CDS) units ("salad spinners") to remove large particles and solid materials will be diverted into a 300 foot, perforated pipe installed into the Lake Merced overflow structure and placed along the upper shoreline of Lake Merced. The stormwater will percolate into the soil and vegetation along the pipeline, migrating into the lake through knot weed, tules and other vegetation. The project is to test whether the wetlands could sufficiently filter the stormwater so that it could become a permanent source of quality water to raise and maintain lake level.

Greg Bartow and Patrick led a discussion about the environmental monitoring program that will evaluate the effectiveness of the wetlands filtration and to ensure that the stormwater does not degrade the lake. The stormwater currently contains coliform. The monitoring program will monitor coliform levels and other potential pollution loads. EOA, an environmental consulting firm in Oakland, and Dr. Robert Cooper, professor emeritus of UC Berkeley School of Public Health, are advising Daly City in establishing testing protocols that will be coordinated with the SFPUC as part of the project. The SFPUC has consulted with representatives of the following agencies and organizations regarding the pilot project design and operation: CA Dept. of Fish and Game, Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Health Department, San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department, California Native Plants Society, Audubon Society, and Cal Trout.

negative impacts are identified. The Water Committee has pushed for an effective monitoring program to ensure that the pilot stormwater diversion project does not create any adverse impacts.

The environmental health monitoring program and engineering for the stormwater diversion program should be ready for the rainy season in January. Results of the pilot project will determine whether stormwater diversion is a viable source of permanent water for Lake Merced.

C. Discussion and development of a position on water policy with regard to restoration efforts at Lake Merced. The Committee discussed the advisability of adopting a policy statement dealing with water policy with regard to restoration efforts at Lake Merced. Having concluded that a policy statement was desirable, the Committee discussed the elements of the policy and concluded that the eight points set forth below should be the policy. Patrick Sweetland and Greg Bartow, as representatives of agencies involved with the lake, abstained in approving the policy statement.

- 1) The Water Committee strongly supports the Lake Merced Task Force resolution urging a target level for the lake in the range 25 to 28 feet (8.5 - 10.5 feet City Datum). The burden of scientific proof lies with any that would want to change that target.
- 2) The lake level should approach that target very slowly, probably not more than 6 inches to a foot each year, in order to permit the environment to adapt smoothly.
- 3) Water quality is an issue, especially as the RWQCB has placed Lake Merced on its impaired lakes list due to low dissolved oxygen, organic enrichment, and pH.
- 4) The lake can not be considered in isolation, but needs to be studied within the context of the Westside Basin aquifer. Other programs, e.g., the recycled water plan, groundwater management plan, storm water management plan, etc. need also to be coordinated.

6) In general then, a systems approach is needed that lays out a long-term strategy, with a planning horizon of 10 to 50 years, that will assure both the of the lake and provision for a sustainable program deriving domestic water from the aquifer.

7) Until a substantial portion of this long-term strategy has been developed additions of imported water to the lake should be limited to those needed to stabilize the lake at its current level. Until a sustainable, long-term program has been developed, no additional system water should be added to Lake Merced for the specific purpose of raising lake level.

8) Aquifer management, as a tool to cure the lake level and water quality problems, should be a prominent component of ongoing plans to deal with those problems unless and until a convincing case has been made that some combination of other tools (the EDAW 4 + Alemen aquifer) is virtually guaranteed to raise the lake to the 25-28 level and keep it there with water of satisfactory quality.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:15PM

Minutes prepared and submitted by Dick Morten and Jerry Cadagan