

**UNB MANAGEMENT COALITION
MINUTES OF MEETING**

Draft 4/21/06

Meeting Date: Thursday, April 20, 2006

Meeting Time : 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Interpretive Center

Attendees:	Matt Yurko (CCC)	Regina Fodor (NBNF)
	Dave Kiff (CNB)	Shirley Greene (NBNF)
	Tom Rossmiller (CNB)	Irwin Haydock (NBNF)
	Brian Shelton (DFG)	Jack Keating (NBNF)
	Parker Hancock (HBP)	Lori Kiesser (NBNF)
	Sue McIntire (HBP)	Paul Kuhn (NBNF)
	Leslie Ray (HBP)	Roger Mallett (NBNF) – Chair
	Kevin Thomas (HBP)	Rita Phillips (NBNF)
	Douglas Moore (HCA)	Dick Watts (NBNF)
	Donna Carroll (NBNF)	Ray Williams (NBNF)

1. Dave reported that there is an osprey on eggs at the Back Bay Science Center (BBSC). The nest is on an elevated platform adjacent to the construction area, and a decision must be made as soon as possible as to whether or not construction activities will need to be temporarily suspended. The osprey is a protected but not an endangered species. Brian indicated that he had had a meeting earlier in the day with Scott Thomas of the Sea and Sage Audubon Society who had advised that construction activities should be suspended until 2-3 weeks after the eggs hatched. There is the possibility of a lawsuit if this is not done. Brian needs to summarize the meeting and report back to Terri Stewart, who will then ask Larry Eng (DFG Regional Manager) to decide what action should be taken. Dave requested that this be done tomorrow (Friday, April 21) because of the groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for Sunday, April 23. Jack commented on an osprey nesting area in Maine he is familiar with that is in much closer proximity to various human activities and asked that any decision be based on scientific data that provides a sound basis for defining the buffer zone or zones needed around the nest.
2. Dave reported on the progress that the City of Newport Beach (CNB), County Harbors, Beaches and Parks (HBP) and the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) are making in establishing a single integrated Resource Management Plan for all of Upper Newport Bay. CNB/HBP/DFG have met to address the development of this RMP. They jointly decided to first see if they could expand the scope of work of ERA, the contractor currently working on the RMP for just the DFG Ecological Reserve, and thus avoid duplicative effort by two contractors and additional government time and effort in developing and issuing a new Request For Proposal from scratch. ERA has provided a cost estimate of \$500,000 to create the comprehensive RMP. CNB is willing to fund the lion's share of this. Kevin indicated that HBP was suggesting it contribute \$100,000. Kevin did caution everyone about the County's policy regarding sole-sourcing. Specific approval is needed and an overriding public benefit must be shown. Brian reported that ERA is about 80% complete on the \$80,000 contract it has with DFG for the Ecological Reserve and stated that DFG did not wish to hold this work up pending discussions on the bay-wide RMP. He estimated that the public review meeting for the draft DFG RMP is about two months away.

3. Discussion took place regarding the formation of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and its role in the RMP development process. The following conclusions were reached:
 1. The TAC will be formed after the contractor involved in preparing the RMP is on board, and will work with the contractor to provide technical input and review to make the work product better and more easily accepted by the public, and advise as to the implementation of the RMP.
 2. The TAC will include representatives of the land-owning agencies as well as other stakeholders such as US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Regional Water Quality Board and non-governmental organizations with specific knowledge and expertise pertaining to UNB. It is anticipated that NBNF will nominate two technically qualified individuals who will funnel input from the NBNF Bay Planning Committee and membership at large into the TAC.
 3. Although some individuals may be on both the Management Coalition and the TAC, the two entities will work independently but harmoniously in parallel. The Management Coalition will implement the RMP.

4. Discussion took place regarding the approach to development and implementation of the RMP to ensure that it will provide the basis for effective adaptive management in which ongoing monitoring and analysis of key parameters is done and management objectives are reviewed and revised as necessary based on the analysis. One significant philosophical issue is deciding on the scope and level of detail of surveys, studies, etc. that need to be accomplished prior to issuing the RMP versus those that are part of the necessary ongoing monitoring. For instance it may be preferable to reduce the scope of the RMP development and have some of the studies done as part of its implementation by staff, volunteers or consultants with specific expertise in each area of interest (e.g. water quality). NBNF has already provided preliminary comments on the ERA proposal to CNB. HBP is currently reviewing the proposal and expects to have comments in about two weeks. It was agreed that a meeting should be held in about three weeks in which CNB, DFG, HBP and NBNF can review together the scope of the bay-wide RMP and see if it needs to be modified. Although subject to change, at this point the rough timetable for the RMP is as follows:
 1. Input on scope revisions in the next three weeks.
 2. RMP contract award in about two months.
 3. RMP development over about a 12-18 month time period.

5. Dave reported on the status of agreements between CNB/HBP/DFG on the management of the Ecological Reserve and the Nature Preserve. In summary:
 1. CNB/HBP are still working on a Master Cooperative Agreement covering various items, such as redevelopment in Santa Ana Heights, in addition to UNB. The ownership and management of the UNB Nature Preserve will remain with HBP. CNB will participate cooperatively.
 2. CNB/DFG are still working on a Term Sheet addressing the management of UNB. The ownership and management of the UNB Ecological Reserve will remain with DFG. CNB will participate cooperatively.

CNB's priority at UNB is resource and species protection, and it intends to help ensure this primarily through the provision of funding to implement the RMP once it is developed.

6. Discussion took place regarding the long-term management of UNB and the involvement of volunteers and non-profit organizations with paid staff and management capabilities such as The Nature Conservancy. It was agreed that non-governmental groups can fulfill a role in implementing policies set

by government agencies, and that the RMP development process should address how best to utilize these resources at UNB.

7. It was agreed that the development of the Operations Plan for the BBSC Education Program will take place through the UNB Education Team that functions under the Management Coalition. The Interpretive Plan developed by Bob Garrison's firm, and the Joint Vision prepared by Janet Yamaguchi will serve as the starting points in creating an integrated set of programs for the whole bay. The Education Team already includes CCC, CNB, DFG, HCA, HBP and NBNF. Appropriate representation from UCI will be added.
8. It was agreed that there are small restoration and other projects that should be performed and problems (e.g. trash pickup and enforcement issues) that should be addressed without waiting for the development of the RMP, in order to demonstrate to the public the intent to make things better at UNB. The UNB Restoration Team will identify and prioritize restoration projects. The Management Coalition will do the same for other issues.
9. Sue and Brian reported on the radical change in attitude of many local residents towards HBP and DFG following the rather negative press coverage at the end of 2005 and the start 2006 concerning the management of UNB. Since then the agency staff are encountering a serious lack of credibility and respect. Instances of dogs off leash, etc. have increased dramatically. It was agreed that a major PR campaign is needed to help give the agencies back their power. As a starting point a letter will be sent out to all the local residents from the Mayor/County Supervisor explaining why UNB is such a precious resource and why they need to do their part to protect it. The letter should address the positive things that the Management Coalition is trying to achieve through the development of a joint Resource Management Plan for the entire Back Bay and other cooperative efforts. Dave will draft the letter for everyone to review. The message will need to be constantly reinforced. NBNF will try to work with both the Pilot and the Register to do a regular monthly piece dealing with UNB. Matt indicated that the ROOTS team would be happy to do more to help educate the local public.
10. Dave mentioned that CNB is working on its General Plan update, and that the City Planners are still hung up on using the term "Marine Park" to describe the Ecological Reserve. Lori will send information to Dave to help him substantiate the deletion of the term "Marine Park".
11. The next MC meeting was set for Thursday, July 20, from 1:00 to 3:00 at the Interpretive Center.

Minutes prepared by Roger Mallett
April 21, 2006