Matt Beard

Trinidad Bay Watershed Council

Meeting Notes
Monday, October 19, 2015, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Civic Club Room, Trinidad Town Hall

Present: Name & Affiliation

Steen Trump	Westhaven Resident
Trever Parker	Streamline Planning, City Planner
Susan Rotwein	Trinidad Resident
Roland Johnson	Westhaven Resident
Don Allan	Westhaven Resident
Becky Price-Hall	Watershed Coordinator, City of Trinidad

Clean Beaches Initiative Grant for Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Repairs and Upgrades

City Planner Trever Parker is the Project Manager for the Clean Beaches Initiative Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Project. Trever explained that the City has been awarded another round of Clean Beaches Initiative funding, with the previous project taking place in 2008 – 10. There were issues with the previous grant be because of the state budget and bond fund freeze, including not being able to conduct sufficient outreach or income screening. Lessons were learned from this process, and the State funder will have more involvement in the project this time around. There is a bacterial water quality problem related to failing septic systems (onsite wastewater treatment systems), some of which are unpermitted or unknown status. To increase the likelihood of achieving detectable water quality improvements, the funder has limited the project area to Parker Creek and Joland /lower Luffenholtz Creek. Through analysis of the GIS using land use, water quality and parcel information, 75 – 100 priority parcels will be identified and offered reduced-cost septic system inspections. Based on the inspection results, approximately 25 systems will be targeted for repair or replacement, with financial assistance being available on a sliding scale to income eligible homeowners.

Discussion: Meeting participants pointed out that there are non-human sources of bacteria in the watersheds which could be causing the creek and beach bacterial contamination problems. It was noted that Little River, with the cattle adjacent to it, has always had bacteria issues, and there are other domestic animals being raised in the watersheds. There was speculation that pollution from Little River could travel north with the currents, creating high bacteria readings at the creek mouths. Trever explained that while animals are a source of bacteria to the watersheds, source tracking studies have indicated that failing septic systems are contributing to the problem. The project monitoring includes targeted sampling in the creeks and at the beaches before and after the septic system improvements. The City has a newly certified lab to conduct DNA analysis, which helps determine whether the bacteria is from human or animal sources. This is very expensive, but Trever would like to find some funding to cover some DNA analysis. Dye testing is another tool for detecting effluent flows from failing system.

TBWC is supported in part through funding from the California State Water Resources Control Board
Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program

The Monitoring Plan and QAPP will hopefully be approved in the next month or two so monitoring can begin in January. For more information, please visit the OWTS Project description on the TBWC website at http://www.trinidadwatersheds.org/programs-and-projects/ .

Watershed & Partner Updates

Becky reported that the California Coastal National Monument Trinidad Gateway meeting will be held Tuesday Oct. 20 in the Civic Club Room to discuss the draft management plan for BLM's lighthouse property on Trinidad Head.

Steen reported that the Land Trust has opened their new office "Ned Simmons Gallery" behind the Library. The Land Trust has hired Ben Morehead as their first paid executive director. The Art Gallery has had another successful year and the artists are doing well. The Coastal Commission has cited several landowners for blocking public access through trail easements held by the Land Trust.

TBWC Priorities for future funding

Becky explained that there are several grant funding sources that might be a good match for several priority projects and solicited input about priorities. The group was interested in seeing specific project descriptions as a basis for discussion. It was agreed that this process may have to take place via email due to the sometimes short timeline for proposal development and submission. In general, the group would like proposals to focus on the Watershed Plan priorities and keep in mind maintaining a balance between water quality and economic activities such as commercial fishing.

Trinidad Bay Watershed Council projects & activities:

The group was pleased with how ***Trinidad Bay in 2015*** turned out, however future editions should include more information about the importance of the fishing industry to the area. Becky suggested adding a page to the website with information about the fishing industry and other economic activities essential to community well-being.

Next Meeting Date: To be determined – the regular date falls on the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.

Future Agenda Items: Onsite Wastewater Treatment System project; water conservation; and using LID to address drought and stormwater issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40.

Submitted by Becky Price-Hall