

MINUTES  
WETLANDS REVIEW BOARD  
SPECIAL MEETING

September 26, 2013, 5:15 p.m. Marine View 4<sup>th</sup> floor conference room

**Meeting Summary**

Board Members Present: Hal Geiger, Amy Sumner, Jerry Medina, Nina Horne, Andrew Campbell

Board Members Absent: Lisa Hoferkamp, Dan Miller, Brenda Wright

A quorum was present.

Staff Members Present: Teri Camery, CBJ Planner

Public Present: Dr. Paul Adamus, Adamus Resource Assessment;

Meeting called to order at 5:20 p.m.

**II. Agenda was approved**

**III. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items**

None

**IV. Board Comments.**

None

**V. Agenda Items**

Wetland Training and Repeatability Assessment Update

Ms. Camery described the WESPAK-SE wetland training workshop held this week, September 23-25. She said they had the maximum number of participants, 25, with many consultants and staff from USFWS, Corps of Engineers, NMFS, DOT, DNR, ADFG, and three non-profit organizations. The workshop had half a day of classroom work and half a day of field work each day, with assessment of two non-tidal sites and one tidal site. For the first site visit, Dr. Adamus went through each question. At the second site visit, participants responded to the questions in small groups. At the final site visit, participants filled out the forms individually. At the follow-up classroom sessions, Dr. Adamus went through the stressor form, field form, and office form for each site and discussed the final score. There were many good discussions.

Ms. Camery went on to describe the repeatability assessment. She said that instead of five volunteers, we were able to get six. That work is happening right now, today and Friday September 27. Participants for this assessment are independently reviewing 6 non-tidal sites and 2 tidal sites, and are strictly forbidden from talking to each other or Dr. Adamus. Dr. Adamus will then take the forms and compare both the overall score and variations between responses to individual answers, to determine the statistical repeatability variation and also to determine if individual questions need to be modified. This task also requires participants to submit comments and questions to both Dr. Adamus and Ms. Camery, for additional documentation of the efforts.

Ms. Sumner attended the wetland training and described the diversity of participants and the helpful discussion. She appreciated the progression of the training with first working together and then individually. Ms. Horne, who attended the training and is also participating in the repeatability assessment, agreed with Ms. Sumner about the training, and said that with the repeatability assessment, everyone is following the rules and not talking. She said that the repeatability participants all have different backgrounds, so she will be curious about the responses. She said it's a good learning process. She noted that it's important to prepare and study before doing the assessment and said that if participants did the assessment professionally, they'd want to look up things on the web such as ownership and culverts. Dr. Adamus noted that under normal circumstances you could speak with the landowner. He said that he will account for these limitations when he reviews the results in the repeatability assessment.

Mr. Geiger asked Ms. Sumner and Ms. Horne what they would take with them for the assessment, if they could. They both said they would take a plant book, a shovel for soil texture, and a field tape measure. Ms. Sumner noted some questions where there was confusion regarding whether they were supposed to look at the whole area versus a sub-area.

Mr. Medina asked if there were any surprises. Ms. Sumner said that some things would need clarification when you're done, that it can't all be done at once. Mr. Campbell asked if you could re-visit the site, and Dr. Adamus replied that yes, there's no time limit, that you could check a site again at different tide levels, etc. He said that during the repeatability assessment, participants were taking an average of 1-1 ½ hours for each site for the field work.

Mr. Geiger asked what the end product would be. Dr. Adamus replied that it would be the data forms (office form, stressor form, and field form) with the final score sheet, a series of scores.

Ms. Sumner described the UAS website with the geospatial GIS database. She said it was impressive, had a tremendous amount of information, and made completing the office forms much easier.

Ms. Horne noted that local knowledge is important in the questions, and she would be hesitant to have out-of-town consultants doing the work, because it's important to work with locals. Ms. Camery agreed, however she felt that the local knowledge could be obtained relatively easily with a call to ADFG.

A general discussion followed about the need for an environmental degree to successfully implement the method, however in some cases people with extensive local knowledge and experience, such as tribal councils, may be able to use the method with guidance. Dr. Adamus described the information that the final manual will include. Ms. Camery noted that the questions include full detail, in additional columns, which describe exactly how the question should be interpreted, the functions addressed by the question, the scientific rationale, and the formulas. She said that when you take the time to read through all of these details with each question, there's a tremendous amount of information. Dr. Adamus stated that it's all very transparent.

Ms. Horne stated that overall the method is easy to use and very do-able.

Mr. Geiger noted that wetland delineations take a lot more time. Dr. Adamus noted that a wetland delineation would still be required for developments, and that WESPAK-SE isn't required yet. He said that the delineation just tells you where the wetland is, through a detailed analysis of soils, hydrology, and vegetation. He said that to do a delineation, you need to be a botanist because you need to know 800 plants, dig many soil pits, and look at hydrological indicators. He said the average wetland delineation takes 1-2 days or longer. He said that a WESPAK assessment takes 2 hours or so depending on the complexity of the site. Ms. Camery noted that the JWMP update will do wetland boundary assessments and the WESPAK assessment, not delineations.

Ms. Sumner noted that there was a good discussion on wetland mitigation at the training.

Dr. Adamus said that he received very useful feedback at the training, and said that the questions have now been reviewed by approximately 200 people. He said he was impressed by the quality of people who came to the training.

Ms. Camery said that the next focus for the grant and for the WRB will be development of the Request for Proposals for the JWMP Update.

## **VII. Pending Permits and Updates**

None.

## **VIII. Planning Commission Liaison Update.**

Mr. Medina provided an overview of recently approved and denied projects, such as the approved 24-unit housing development on Douglas (near Cordova Street) and the Atlin Re-zone, which was denied.

## **IX. Next meeting: Thursday October 17 5:15 p.m., City hall room 224**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:30 p.m.