

**PORT OF LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**WATER QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE**  
Port of Los Angeles  
425 S. Palos Verdes Street  
San Pedro, California

Minutes  
February 20, 2008

ATTENDEES

PCAC MEMBERS

Donna Ethington, Co-Chair  
June Burlingame Smith, Voting Member  
Scott Kurtz, Alternate Member

PORT STAFF

Kathryn Curtis

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Lee Hubbard  
Sofia Mahagheh, City of LA, DPW  
David Mangold A  
Robert Miller  
Lisa Peterson  
Rick Whearty

Meeting Location: POLA Charter High School, 250 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, San Pedro

- A. Call to Order: 5:15PM
- B. Sign In / Introductions
- C. Agenda Approved
- D. Minutes Approved for January 16, 2008, Water Quality Subcommittee Meeting
- E. Public Comment: None
- F. Discussion of Pilot Project to Reduce Trash and Contaminants in Dominguez Channel & Harbor Outfalls:
  - The Dominguez Watershed, which is part of the LA County Flood Control covers 110 square miles and drains into the harbor from multiple outfalls and the Dominguez Channel. The Dominguez Watershed Master Plan, developed under the jurisdiction of the LA County Dept of Public Works provides an opportunity for stakeholders within the watershed to determine and implement solutions to contaminant problems that have been identified in the Master Plan. Several improvement/restoration projects within the watershed, Inner Cabrillo Beach, Wilmington Drain, Machado Lake and Peck Park Canyon have been approved for Prop O funding and are in the design, bid or construction phases. However, there have been no projects proposed that address the Dominguez Channel since the Master Plan was adopted in April 2004.

It is vital to reduce trash in the Dominguez Channel and the Harbor outfalls in order to improve water quality and to eliminate the pollutants that contaminate both the water and the soil. The pilot project will focus on reducing trash and bacteria that creates hazards, safety and health concerns in the marinas and throughout the harbor. Although trash is not the only source of bacteria, eliminating it will help reduce bacteria and other contaminants that cling to debris.

Much of the trash can be stopped before it enters storm drains and waterways through a combination of public awareness and trash-capture devices. There are a variety of trash-capture systems available that includes separators, catch basin inserts, filters, retention basins and nets, as well as system installations and evaluations done by cities, environmental groups and research institutes across the country, and other funding sources.

Components of the proposed project include: identifying problem outfalls, prioritizing those with the highest trash/bacteria levels, tracking down the source of contaminates, determining the best preventative devices/methods, developing an implementation plan and partnering with the Port, Dept of Public Works (DPW) and relevant cities and community groups along the Dominguez Channel to secure help and funding for testing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

- **Brief Overview of Dominguez Watershed Master Plan**  
The Dominguez Watershed Master Plan is the integration and coordination of activities (flood protection, water conservation, natural resource management, pollution of water resources, and the preservation of open space for recreation and habitat in the watershed).

Taken directly from the DPW LA County website, the plan consists of three distinct sections:

1. “The first section will include an introduction to the goals of the Master Plan, and the background, physical description, and environmental conditions of the watershed. Existing, historic, and planned future conditions of the watershed will be summarized. Data gaps in the background information that limit understanding of watershed conditions will be identified.
2. The second section of the Master Plan will address and prioritize the issues, concerns, problems, goals and objectives identified by all stakeholders in the watershed, document the coordination and public outreach process, and identify stakeholder commitments and public involvement opportunities for the implementation phase of the watershed Master Plan.
3. The Final Portion of the Master Plan will outline prioritized methods and projects for watershed improvement based on baseline information and issues, concerns and goals identified in the previous sections. It will provide guidelines for, and ensure most effective implementation of, actions that

achieve measurable environmental improvement and outline funding opportunities for the proposed actions.”

(<http://dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/watershed/dc/DCMP/summary.cfm>)

- Presentation - AbTech Industries, Smart Sponge Technology  
This item was not presented and was deferred to a future meeting.
- Catch Basin Inserts & Screen Covers  
The LA River and Ballona Creek have trash and bacteria TMDLs, which requires the City to reduce bacteria levels and eliminate all trash by 2015. Sofia Mohagheh, LA DPW, Bureau of Sanitation, Watershed Protection Division, reported that they had received Prop O funding to install screen covers and catch basin inserts for these waterways. Prior to installation a study was done city-wide to determine trash generation areas, which are primarily in downtown areas and the sites were prioritized based on the level of trash generation.

The DPW has installed approximately 14,000 screen covers and about 7,000 inserts, including a few in Wilmington and San Pedro. Screen covers appear to be 90% effective at stopping the trash and the inserts are about 98% effective. Covers and inserts are being installed in 3 phases in high and medium trash generation areas. They are presently working on phase 3 and will be installing 34,000 covers and inserts by 2011. 525 of the sites are in the 15<sup>th</sup> Council District and will be installed at the end of phase 3.

Although projects submitted for Prop O funding exceeded the \$500M bond measure by \$78M as of December 2007, Ms Mohagheh assured the committee that all installations will be completed. Ms. Ethington requested Ms Mohagheh to provide a list of catch basin areas in the 15<sup>th</sup> Council District where screens / inserts will be installed to avoid a duplication of efforts.

- Update on Port Consultants’ Water Quality and Sediment Studies  
The Port and other stakeholders are working with the Regional Water Quality Control Board and EPA to establish TMDLs for the Dominguez Watershed and the Port has contributed water quality and sediment testing data to the two agencies for their use in developing the TMDLs. As a followup to testing conducted in 2005/2006, enhanced water quality testing (including more chemical constituents) will be conducted quarterly in 2008 in conjunction with the Port’s routine monthly water quality monitoring.

Ms. Curtis will have an updated map of the monitoring locations in the Port and the consultants’ test results from the January 2008 enhanced sampling at the next meeting.

- Identifying Problem Outfalls & Sources of Contaminates  
Collecting test samples at outfalls can be done, but safety may be an issue. Identifying the source of contaminants from the samples will not be easy because of the number of storm drains that merge prior to reaching the outfalls and the number of cities through which they run. Ms. Mohagheh said the DPW identifies contaminants by taking samples from catch basins. Capturing trash at

the outfalls is difficult in that the volume and velocity of the water coming from the outfalls during a rain storm can overcome or clog devices but may work in low-flow situations. Debris captured in catch basin inserts is vacuumed out by Vector. Debris that backs up at screen covers is captured during street sweeping. Both operations are performed at least once a month and more frequently during rainy months to prevent street flooding.

- Multiple Solutions – Identifying the Best Applications

The best strategy would be to catch the trash up stream before it reaches the outfalls. The committee made the following suggestions:

- Request that the Port assist in promoting a TV campaign (College/ documentary film competition)
- Promote an education campaign on trash and its affects on our environment
- Enforce the litter laws and use fines as a means of teaching the public not to litter. Notify elected officials that they need to help enforce the laws.
- Eliminate the use of Styrofoam and institute fees for those businesses who insist on using it
- Use booms to re-route the trash toward the bank of the channel where the trash can be collected on a regular basis
- Institute neighborhood trash teams to inspect their neighborhoods for accumulated trash and catch basin problems. The visibility of the team would also help to alert neighborhood residents of the problem
- Distribute literature that can be provided by the city/county to schools, youth organizations, teens, scouts... to broadcast the affects of trash
- Ms. Mohaghegh encouraged the committee to use the City and county phone numbers to report trash accumulation and damaged catch basins or storm drains to have it removed or repaired.

City: 888-CLEANLA or 888-253-2652

County: 311

- Potential Port-Cities-Community Partnerships

This discussion was deferred to the next meeting.

G. Next Meeting: March 19, 2008

H. Adjournment: 7:00PM

Signature on File

Donna Ethington, Co-Chair  
Water Quality Subcommittee

Signature on File

Debra Babcock-Doherty, PCAC Executive Assistant