

Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team

TEAM UPDATE

February 18, 2009

Lots of good work is underway as we move through February.

1. **Policy Committee Report.** The Policy Committee met on January 30 and had a very productive meeting. The Committee will meet on the last Friday of every month at 10 a.m. at the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board offices. Action Team reports follow.
 - a. **The Border Action Team** met on January 28 according to Co-Chair Tony Heinrichs. The team has a brainstorming session about the best system to stop trash and unwanted sediment at the border. The \$250,000 grant from the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) will provide great insight since the funding is being used to put in place a pilot trash fence in Goal Canyon. The Southwest Interpretive Association (SWIA) will implement. If it works well there, it could be emulated at the other entry points.
 - b. **The Cleanup Action Team** has finalized a scope of services for \$100,000 grant from CIWMB to conduct a characterization study of trash and sediment in the valley which will include an accurate base map of current conditions and topographical map. Co-Chair Cid Tesoro reported that the first draft will be available this summer with a final in the fall. The County of San Diego is coordinating. The Cleanup Action Team will also be preparing a \$750,000 cleanup grant for consideration by the State Water Quality Control Board.
 - c. **The Restoration Action Team** is looking into a \$1 million NOAA grant to stop marine debris since Tijuana River Valley trash can end up in the ocean. Co-Chair Clay Phillips says the valley might also be eligible for Army Corps of Engineers funding as a Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) and a meeting is being arranged with the contracting arm of the Corps. Clay will be attending an EPA meeting in Washington on February 26 and will be reinforcing the need for assistance with the Recovery Team at that meeting and in visits to federal elected officials.
 - d. **The Bi-National Action Team** has met numerous times with the Tijuana Director of Redevelopment both in Tijuana and on a valley tour according to Co-Chair Oscar Romo. The City of Tijuana is planning to conduct its own trash characterization study and is looking at georeferencing the runoff channels so they can be considered for catchment basins. The Bi-National Action Team is also working with Mexican officials to seeking funding in Mexico even as language is being drafted in Sacramento that would allow California money to be spent in Mexico if it addresses the trash/sediment issue. The team's other Co-Chair, Nicholas Surjan, reported he will be attending a Border 2012 meeting in Nogales in March and will bring up the Recovery Team's work. He has forwarded emails to US EPA about the Recovery Team's work. He also sees the possibility of funding through the Border Environmental Cooperation Commission.
2. **Work continues on a new brochure** to outline the work of the Recovery Team to those with an interest in helping move our efforts forward. Malcolm Pirnie has agreed to provide graphic design. We thank you!
3. **Leslie Laudon to replace Laura Peters.** Laura Peters from the State Water Control Board has moved on to another position, she will be replaced on the Cleanup Action Team by Laura Laudon, the Manager of the Bonds Section of the Board's Division of Financial Assistance. Thanks for your assistance Laura and welcome aboard Leslie!
4. **FOX News Aired Story on Recovery Team Work.** Fox News aired a story on the trash issue in the Tijuana River Valley. They interviewed WildCoast representative Ben McCue and acknowledged that a multi-agency task force was working on the issue. Video can be viewed at <http://www.fox5sandiego.com/pages/video/?autoStart=true&topVideoCatNo=default&clipId=3410387> .

As always, thanks for your work and participation. Please keep coming back!

John Robertus, Co-Chair
Carl Nettleton, Co-Chair