

Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team

TEAM UPDATE

March 20, 2009

1. **NOAA Restoration Project Grants.** The Policy Committee met on March 18 in a quickly-called session to brainstorm opportunities to submit grant proposals to the NOAA Coastal and Marine Habitat Restoration Project Grants. As much as \$170 million will be available nationally with approved projects expected to be between \$1.5 and \$10 million. The deadline is April 6. Projects must be “shovel-ready” by or soon after the awards are granted (approximately the first part of June) and must be completed within 12 to 18 months. Discussion will be continuing between now and the March 27 Recovery Team meeting when additional details will be available.
2. **Action Team Updates.** The action teams continue to move forward.
 - a. **The Border Action Team** responded to several possible opportunities for grants by developing language and initial estimates for trash diversion devices on the border and sedimentation basins. While those grant opportunities were not as substantial as hoped, the exercise better prepared the team for future grant opportunities. Under a City contract, URS has been asked to provide further refinements on trash net and sedimentation basin estimates. The team is also looking at how the culverts under the border fence can be part of the process to divert trash. Additional investigation is underway to determine if environmental review of the fence project could be helpful in determining what mitigation might have been appropriate, recognizing the fence was built without environmental review for public safety reasons and not to disregard the environment.
 - b. **The Cleanup Action Team** finalized and presented a proposal to the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board for a \$700,000 cleanup grant. The board endorsed the proposal and has sent the request to the State Water Quality Control Board for consideration.
 - c. **The Restoration Action Team** focused on preparing for the NOAA Restoration Grant and has been working with the Tijuana River National Estuary Research Reserve and the Southwest Interpretive Association on estuary-related projects for the grant.
 - d. **The Bi-National Action Team** arranged for a Recovery Team presentation at the Border 2012 California-Baja California Water Task Force on March 11, 2009. The meeting resulted in three Mexican agencies requesting to join the Recovery Team: the City of Tijuana’s Urban Development Department (which handles solid waste), CESPTE (the region’s water agency), and the Mexican Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission. The director of the Urban Development Department made a presentation showing the steps to improve collection of solid waste in Tijuana. Tijuana is also conducting a new characterization study to map the sources of trash in the region.
3. **Recovery Team Website.** Please go to www.tjriverteam.org to check out the new Recovery Team website. This will not be the ultimate website, but is a work in progress to begin collecting the information necessary to build the Recovery Team community. The site includes a forum for each of the action teams and a copy of the presentation made at the Border 2012 meeting. Please send any suggestions or sources of information (i.e. links or pdfs of reports, maps, etc.) to Carl Nettleton at cnettleton@san.rr.com.
4. **New Team Members.** Please welcome Karen Bane from the California Coastal Conservancy to our team. Karen is the coordinator for the Conservancy’s Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project. Also joining the team is Roberto Espinosa, the Mexican Representative to the International Boundary and Water Commission. New team members from the California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Coastal Commission, CESPTE, and the City of Tijuana are expected to be announced soon.

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

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