

Meeting Notes
EJ Subcommittee Meeting
January 28, 2005
At **OAKLAND RELEAF**

I. **Welcome and Introduction:** CALFED appreciates the hospitality and professionalism of the staff at *Oakland / Urban Releaf* who hosted this meeting. Oakland Releaf is a non-profit organization receiving funding from the CALFED Watershed Program to use urban forestry (tree planting) to improve the quality of life and provide watershed benefits to parts of the inner-city.

II. **Updates:**

GIS project: It was reported that the EJ-Watershed Program joint project to develop GIS data sets and mapping of selected communities is moving ahead. The subcommittee selected two sites, as requested by the project implementers, California Dept of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDFFP), to be used as the first examples of the project. The initial mapping will include Richmond (urban) and the McCloud River Watershed (rural). Richmond is familiar to the subcommittee and the McCloud River Watershed is the home of the Winnemem Wintu Tribe, who have come before the subcommittee and the Bay-Delta Authority to protest plan for the raising of Shasta Dam.

CALEPA EJ ACTION Plan: Attendees were encouraged to attend the upcoming CALEPA EJ meetings on 2/15 and 2/16 respectively. These meetings mark the first time, under the new Administration, that CALEPA's new EJ Advisory Committee will meet. CALEPA is on an aggressive timetable to adopt and implement its EJ Action Plan. Dr. Henry Clark is a member of the Advisory Committee and Ms. La Donna Williams serves as his alternate. Both have promised to report back regularly to this subcommittee.

CALFED Finance Plan: The Finance Plan was approved at the last CBDA – BDPAC joint meeting, and will now be included as part of the Governor's annual budget. The EJ subcommittee efforts to seek additional funding for EJ were successful. EJ concerns are highlighted in the Executive summary and the Oversight & Coordination section of the plan. Perhaps most importantly, CALFED now acknowledges that within the EJ workplan there are several potential project and directed action opportunities. It is now incumbent on the EJ subcommittee and EJ Coordinator to work with the Programs and implementing agencies to identify and these actions and projects. This new reality will help govern how the EJ subcommittee and Coordinator will work with Programs as they develop their annual Program Plans.

III. **PRESENTATIONS**

Olin Webb (Bayview - Hunter's Point Community Action): Olin has worked for several years as a community organizer and leader in San Francisco's Bayview Hunter's Point region. He has been at the forefront of struggles in that community to clean up Superfund sites, urban creeks, air emissions, and other forms of pollution and toxic waste

in the community. Olin described the community as “overburdened”, but that because he and others view EJ as a “people issues”, they see EJ as providing a form of relief and clean-up that will improve the quality of life for the residents. CALFED Watershed funding supported the community through the “Yosemite Slough” Project to help set up a community council to address the EJ issues. Olin reported that the funds eventually ran out, and now the council is “struggling”. Olin pledged to continue working with the subcommittee, and the CALFED process. Removal of the Superfund site is the key goal for that community, along with addressing Mercury, PCB and dioxin contamination in the Bay. It was suggested that Olin was really describing a common situation with grants such as the one received by the Yosemite Slough Project. There is a need to continue funding and support as groups move from “assessment to stewardship”.

Kemba Shakur, Exec. Director *Oakland/Urban Relief*: Kemba, besides being gracious in hosting the meeting, provided a very comprehensive overview and tour of their project area. Using approximately \$350,000 of Watershed grant funding, her organization has been working with a youthful staff and volunteers to plant up to 100,000 trees in barren and concrete-laden areas of Oakland and West Oakland – with plans for expansion into North Richmond and Bayview-Hunter’ Point. Kemba explained the importance of the trees in terms of beautification, improvements in air quality, and for their stormwater runoff benefits in the watershed. They have a UC-Berkeley scientist on staff as well as an accomplished IT / Admin staff that coordinates their volunteer activities. Over the lunch period, meeting participants toured several blocks in Oakland to see the work of the organization. It was apparent to all that the block with trees looked better and more livable than neighboring blocks. Kemba and her assistant, Kevin Jefferson, explained how residents who have relived trees were grateful and supportive of the work. Many youth have been used to plant and maintain the trees, while learning about the watershed benefits of the work.

Lauren Bell, Consultant: Lauren has been working with CLAFED for the past several months. She briefly described her role in the Performance Measures work now underway at CALFED. She offered to assist EJ efforts to work on both Performance Measures and Program Plans.

IV. **Program Plans:** An extensive discussion took place regarding the annual CALFED Program Plan exercise. Ken explained that last year was the first year with a separate EJ section (Science, EJ, and Tribal) in the Program Plans. This year the expectations for more meaningful EJ integration run high – both in the EJ community and within CALFED. Attendees discussed the notion of a workshop to assist EJ committee members on the Program Plan process. If a workshop can’t be held in a timely manner, some members agreed to discuss informally the work ahead. Plans for the next few subcommittee meetings will include presentations on each plan followed by subcommittee discussions on how to best integrate EJ this year.

V. Attendees

Dr. Henry Clark, acting Co-Chair

Alisah Deen

Jessica Kaplow

Machael Warurton

Lauren Bell

Dan Wermiel

Fraser Schilling

Casey Walsh Cady

Olin Webb

Delphine Smith

Kemba Shakur

Kevin Jefferson

Ken McGhee