

**SOUTH SLOUGH NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE
MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

South Slough Reserve Interpretive Center
Charleston, Oregon

Minutes of the 141st Regular Meeting
December 17, 2014

Commission members present:

Mary Abrams, Chair	Toni Ann Brend
Nicole Jackson, Vice Chair	Bob Main
Kris Wall- <i>via WebEx</i>	Trent Hatfield
Bob Cowen- <i>via WebEx</i>	Craig Young
David Kronsteiner	

South Slough NERR staff and others present:

Gary Cooper, Manager	Hannah McDonald
Craig Cornu	Bree Yednock
Tom Gaskill	Colleen Burch Johnson
Deborah Rudd	John Bragg
Kathy Andreasen	Don Smith
Adam DeMarzo	Ali Helms
Lonne & Laura Mays, FOSS	Nate Damewood
Kassie Rippee, Coquille Indian Tribe	Pam Wilson
Curt Clay, FOSS	Ed Oswald
Megan Joyce, AmeriCorps	Joy Tally
Erik Larsen	Jenna Kulluson

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by the Chair of the Commission, Mary Abrams.

INTRODUCTIONS

Everyone present at the meeting introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Chair Abrams asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Kronsteiner moved to approve and Commissioner Young seconded. The minutes were approved with all in favor.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Cooper asked if there were any comments from the public. There was no public input.

OLD BUSINESS

Fredrickson House and Barn

Tom Gaskill provided an update on the status of the Fredrickson house and barn. Mr. Gaskill reported that to the degree feasible, the Fredrickson house remains secured from public entry and no further removal of exterior boards is evident. Securing the barn structure from public access is not feasible without potentially disturbing any sub-surface historical artifacts that may be present in the area. At the present time, no further damage is noted to the structure.

A funding proposal has been submitted by the Friends of South Slough and the South Slough NERR to the Coquille Tribal Community Fund which seeks \$19,635 to fund planning and collaboration with the Tribe and other interested parties in documenting the history of the site, developing an interpretive plan, and conducting an historical and architectural analysis to determine costs of any restoration and construction work indicated by the planning effort. If funded, the initial phase would then require additional fundraising of \$35,500 to undertake the work.

An initial estimate of cost for reconstruction of the exterior of the Fredricksen house was provided by Larry Burroughs of DLB Construction in the amount of \$70,400. This would include the following items: wood windows, doors, cedar siding, roof (materials similar to what was used when originally built), sheeting under the roof and siding, reinforcement of floor joists, ceiling joists, and piling, and repair of rotten framing. If reconstruction of the interior of the house is to be included, the cost is estimated to be three times the exterior estimate.

Mr. Gaskill added that staff had contacted the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and discussed the project with Historic Preservation Specialist Jason Allen. After an initial conversation, Mr. Allen referred staff to Joy Sears, also of the SHPO to conduct a site visit and provide perspective on the state requirements and potential paths for addressing the site. A site visit was conducted on December 3rd and Coquille Tribe members Toni Ann Brend and Denny Hockema, South Slough staff, and local builder Seth Lucas participated in the meeting with Ms. Sears.

During the course of the site visit, Ms. Sears described a possible process of “arrested decay” that is employed by Oregon State Parks for sites where historic buildings are in a degraded condition and require moderate work to stabilize the structure. This provides an opportunity for interpretation without undertaking a major restoration which is not warranted without a clear use plan for the structure. While this is one possible path for the structures, a more involved planning process is recommended before taking this approach. At the conclusion of her visit, Ms. Sears explained that now that she is familiar with the site and project and will meet with Mr. Allen to recommend next steps for the project. Her on-site recommendation for a process parallels the approach proposed in the funding request presented to the Coquille Tribal Community Fund.

Gary Cooper explained that at present the South Slough Reserve has no staff or funding available to dedicate to the Fredrickson structures. He added that the Commission should anticipate an update on the project at the spring 2015 meeting regarding the status of funding requests in support of the proposed work.

NEW BUSINESS

Reorganization

Chair Abrams and Cyndi Wickham held a meeting on November 14th with administrators from the University of Oregon and Oregon State University to provide information and answer questions on the proposed transfer of the Reserve’s state partnership from the Department of State Lands to another entity. Reserve manager Gary Cooper and NOAA representative Kris Wall also attended the meeting along with Commissioners Young and Cowen. The Universities are interested in the prospect and are reviewing options internally. Both Universities have very limited funds and administrators are discussing how to manage the financial commitment that would be involved in serving as the Reserve’s state partner. Currently, the state’s Common School Fund contributes about \$600,000 to match the Federal funds from NOAA to maintain Reserve operations on an annual basis. The State Land Board, as trustees of the Common School Fund would ultimately make the decision.

Chair Abrams explained that while there is no urgency to complete a transition, the Department of State Lands with their particular mission, is not able to provide adequate programmatic input for the South Slough research or education work. Processing grants and land acquisition

requests for research and education purposes is also more complicated for the Department of State Lands due to legislative and political considerations than it would be for institutes of higher education. The agency believes that a university would be the best partner for the South Slough since both universities and National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERR) have missions of education and research. Currently seven of the 28 NERR's reside with University partners.

In response to a question from Commissioner Jackson regarding the possible transfer of ownership of lands, Chair Abrams replied that she thought it would be simpler to leave the land in fee title with DSL, and negotiate with a long term lease if necessary. This would eliminate the need for significant land acquisition funding and avoid unnecessary legal work around permanent disposal of SSNERR lands which are classified as "constitutional lands."

Commissioner Hatfield asked if there was a chance that the proposed transition would bring about a diminished South Slough Reserve. Chair Abrams said that the idea was to strengthen not diminish the Reserve. She added that she and Gary Cooper have been clear that in any transition it is critical that South Slough Reserve staff be protected. Mr. Cooper agreed, and added that the mission and the staffing of the Reserve would be fully retained, and there would be a seamless transition in regard to both. Commissioner Young agreed that no jobs should be jeopardized.

South Slough NERR Management Plan Update

Coastal Training Program coordinator John Bragg briefed the Commission on the status of the management plan revision. On Nov. 1, 2014 SSNERR submitted an outline of the revised management plan to NOAA for review and comment. The outline was approved and returned to SSNERR with comments from NOAA reviewers at the Office for Coastal Management. In general, the reviewers were enthusiastic about the management priorities, goals, objectives and actions developed by staff in the outline.

Three priority management issues were identified by staff in the outline:

- #1— Characterize and communicate the current trends and likely future effects of climate change on Pacific Northwest coastal and estuarine ecosystems and communities;
- #2—Apply a comprehensive and adaptive approach to habitat protection in the South Slough Reserve and managed lands; and
- #3—Monitor, research, manage, and communicate the impacts of existing and emerging invasive species within the Reserve and

characterize potential threats from other locations within the Coos watershed.

Priority management issues generally reflect new developments, information, challenges and solutions. Identification of priority issues in the management plan does not preclude other management issues that must be addressed, including emerging issues or adaptive management actions to address changes in on-going projects and work.

A rough draft of the management plan will be circulated to the Commissioners for their comments prior to its submission to NOAA on March 1, 2015. In answer to questions, Chair Abrams said it would be premature to include the possibility of the state partner transition in the management plan. Gary Cooper concurred with this. Mr. Bragg concluded by inviting Commissioners to contact him anytime if they have questions about the plan's development.

March 2015 Meeting Location Change

It was brought to the attention of the Commission that the Interpretive Center auditorium will be in use during Natural Resources Day on March 19, 2015, the scheduled date for the next regular Commission meeting. In consideration of this, Commissioner Young recommended that staff contact the administrative office at OIMB to inquire if the Commission meeting could be held in the OIMB dining hall. The Commission was amenable to the change in location, and Chair Abrams said that they would be informed once the use of the dining hall was approved.

PRESENTATIONS

Teacher Training

Tom Gaskill, Joy Tally and Jenna Kulluson gave an informative presentation on the teacher development efforts at the Reserve titled *Teacher Professional Development - Past, Present and Future*.

Rookery Bay NERR, Florida

Megan Joyce, South Slough Reserve's new AmeriCorps member, gave an interesting presentation on the Rookery Bay NERR in Naples, Florida where she worked as an Education Specialist prior to coming to the South Slough NERR.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Abrams adjourned the meeting at 2:55 p.m. She wished everyone a happy holiday. Door swags were available for anyone who wanted one after the meeting.

