

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Climate Action Working Group: September 25, 2015

Tamalpais Conference Room, 175 N. Redwood Blvd., San Rafael

Present: Co-chairs Pam Reaves and Doug Wilson, Nona Dennis, Kate Powers, Heather Furmidge, Tom Flynn, Roger Roberts, Susan Robinson, Mary Morgan, Pat Nelson, Belle Cole. Also present: Shalini Swaroop, guest speaker, MCE legislative and regulatory counsel; Chris Callaway, aide to Marin Supervisor Damon Connolly.

Doug opened the meeting at 9:05.

Quick Intros: Attendee introductions.

Approval of the Agenda: Agenda was approved by consensus.

Approval of Minutes: Doug provided a correction of the minutes from the August meeting. M/S/P. Kate/Mary/Approved as amended.

Introduction of guest speaker Shalini Swaroop

Doug described Shalini's role as MCE's regulatory and legislative counsel, and recapped MCL's recent history of working productively with MCE. Very recent collaborations include a five-hour MCE training session for community advocates who will go back to their communities to advocate for Deep Green and renewable energy and MCE in general. This training for advocates was spearheaded by Main Street Moms and MCL. MCL has a history of writing letters and advocating for MCE. For example, MCL went to Sacramento to advocate on AB 2145 and wrote a letter regarding PG&E's application to build EV charging stations. MCL is in a good position to advocate for MCE in circumstances that complement MCE's own advocacy efforts. MCL has been seeking guidance on how to do this more effectively.

Guest Speaker Presentation and Discussion

Shalini will speak on three topics today: the cost-allocation mechanism, SB 350, and exit fees.

Cost-allocation mechanism

The community gets to choose its source of energy. Under SB 790, CCAs have their own procurement authority. HOWEVER, utilities can give part of their nonrenewable energy to CCAs where conventional resources must be on grid to maintain grid reliability. And utilities can pass the costs of these resources on to CCA aggregators.

This practice of shunting brown power to MCE places MCE in a loss position because MCE already has these resources in its power sources. MCE has sought to recover costs of the cost-allocation mechanism at the CPUC, and has so far been unsuccessful. MCE could use MCL's help in arguing. Advocacy efforts should be timed to when the issue comes to a head in long-term procurement plan proceedings. Procurement plans have a 10-year horizon. The cost-allocation

mechanism issue was not heard in the 2014 proceeding. The next opportunity is in 2016. MCE will seek to change the scope of the proceedings to add CCA issues, including brown power costs.

Comments: Mary noted that in 2016 there will be more CCAs on the ground, giving a stronger voice to their issues. Roger suggested that we need to address the argument that solar users are not paying for all of their costs. The grid needs to integrate renewables. Therefore, there should be an ability to offset costs of renewables, not brown power. Chris proposed that there should be a statewide level of coordination for CCAs, perhaps a regulatory call once a month and legislative calls as needed.

In response to comments, Shalini noted that there is a varying level of regulatory participation among CCAs. Sonoma Clean Power has not been involved at the CPUC, most likely being occupied with the other issues that occupy a new CCA. Clean Power SF has been putting major resources toward regulation, because it has a lot of resources at its disposal. San Mateo, Santa Clara, Alameda, and Monterey are allies/potential allies at the CPUC. Los Angeles is moving toward a CCA. As bigger groups come online, there will be an improvement in the level and breadth of advocacy.

Shalini also noted the variations in the behavior of IOUs. San Diego, like PG&E, is aggressive. So. Cal. Edison is less hostile. Shalini and Roger commented that the utilities' concern is that CCAs are contributing to stranded costs, which, the utilities argue, exceed avoided costs. This contention is subject to strong counter-argument.

SB 350

Key Provisions for CCAs

SB 350 said that renewable energy costs could be passed on to all.

The governor is intent on establishing a regional approach (for example, a regional ISO)—his objective is to have one integrated way to look at energy in California. The governor is advocating for a requirement that all energy providers submit an integrated resource plan to the CPUC for approval. This presents a problem for CCAs, because placing the CPUC in the position of approving/disapproving their plans conflicts with the discretion of the CCA boards. The parties have arrived at a compromise: the CCAs will submit plans to the CPUC, but the CPUC will not have authority over the plans.

The goal of doubling energy efficiency might have cut out CCAs. Advocacy got CCAs mentioned.

SB 350 says that all energy providers must have 60% renewable energy in long-term contracts. This provision does not take adequate account of the needs of new CCAs with increased costs. There is need of a bridge provision for them. Advocates for CCAs will focus on coordinating with new CCAs to get new legislation passed in a couple of years when they can show the practical impact of this long-term contract provision. Shawn Marshall of LEAN is advocating for a ramp-up period.

Comments: Doug stated that MCL wrote a letter to Marc Levine and he (Doug) made phone calls urging him to vote for SB 350. Levine's staff would not answer his questions or indicate how he would vote. Shalini answered that it was unclear until the last day whether CCA provisions would go in. A number of environmental legislators were waiting to see what would happen.

Mary noted the barrage of emails urging the public to call their legislators, for example, those from 350.org. These emails failed to mention CCAs at all. Why? Shalini answered that many organizations are ignorant of how CCAs affect climate change. CCAs take on only 1 – 2% of PGE's load. It takes a while for a balanced picture to emerge, and organizations are in charge of how they communicate to their constituents. Educating other organizations is an opportunity for MCL advocacy.

PCIA (Power Charge Indifference Adjustment) – Exit Charges

When a utility customer departs from PG&E, resulting in a departing load from PG&E's utility portfolio, PG&E is entitled to get paid for the long-term energy that PG&E has procured on behalf of that customer. PG&E procures energy under 10-25 year contracts. The exit charge is supposed to end at some point for the departing customer (reflecting the length of the procurement contract), but this does not happen in practice because the clock resets every time the customer moves.

PG&E has known of CCAs for some time, but is not integrating the corresponding shift in load in its planning process. This failure to plan for effects of CCAs is part of PG&E's effort to fight the end of the monopoly model for energy. Under a recent CPUC decision, PG&E must start including CCA projections in its energy procurement plan.

The PCIA fee is set to increase with a projected 72% increase for residential rates in 2016. PCIA average fee is \$130/yr. CARE customers also pay a PCIA fee to PG&E, representing a larger portion of their bills. PG&E is unique among utilities in charging the exit fee to CARE customers.

Comments: Kate asked: who is the target group for advocacy on this issue? Answer: Grassroots advocacy is needed at the CPUC and the governor's office. Picker at the CPUC is not supportive of CCAs; Peterman is supportive.

Doug noted the timeline constraints for letter-writing at MCL, entailing a vetting process at the MCL board. It would be helpful to get information and decision points out in a timely way so that we have some lead time. A realistic goal is 4-6 letters per year. Shalini replied that MCE Public Affairs and Legal departments may integrate their efforts regarding strategy for regulatory argument. This will facilitate getting the information out in a timely way. Shalini will provide information about the decision points to the extent that she can foresee them. CPUC is required to provide public notice, but may keep the decision under consideration for varying amounts of time.

Heather and Mary noted that Main Street Moms does not have the same kind of vetting and review process as MCL. They can write lots of letters, provided that MCE provides the

arguments that the Moms can rely on. Mary suggested that Shalini communicate with the Moms directly.

Potential to-do item: Shalini will communicate with Main Street Moms about letter-writing after checking with her boss.

Belle suggested a weekly, bulleted, newsletter-type message calling attention to matters needing public support.

Roger noted a forest v. trees issue regarding letter-writing and suggested that MCL develop a broad, umbrella policy on CCAs that would cover many individual issues. That would allow for more adroit maneuvering.

To do: Shalini will send her MCE policy to Doug.

Doug suggested that it would be useful to have a one-page document to boil down the issues. Shalini said she happened to have one, and gave us a document.

10:00: Discussion on the state of planning for climate change in the County and cities of Marin: Chris Callaway

Efforts to get all of the jurisdictions on the same page continue. Chris reported that he and Damon Connolly are meeting with Dana Armanino next week re the County implementation team and moving the Climate Action Plan along.

Chris and Damon are also talking with DPW.

They expect to get the Plan before the Board of Supervisors in November. They would like people to stand up and say “Let’s do this.”

Comments: Doug stated that there is not much coordination among the cities. There should be more coordination.

Roger suggested that we make a presentation before the Mayors and Council members meeting. We need a focus for the presentation. The presentation could address the need for coordination among cities regarding the Climate Action Plan and their implementation of the plan. We should talk to Dana and Christina before making such a presentation.

Belle mentioned Michael Bloomberg’s Compact of Mayors, a nonprofit organization, which expresses support for climate change action. How do we get our mayors to sign up? Mayors of many small cities are not on board—for example, San Rafael.

Mary asked if there is a document that is like a grid, showing how our cities are doing on climate change issues. Answer: Yes. See marintracker.org. It displays a map, and when you hover over a city, it provides information.

Tom asked, what is the most important topic? Synergy? Joint implementation? We need to establish groundwork for common concerns rather than competition. There is a history of city pushback against County authority.

To do: MCL should meet with Kate Sears. We need to get out information on what she's doing re sea level rise. MCL is in a good position to bring people into the conversation.

Susan asked, what is the role of Bruce Riordan at Marin Community Foundation? Answer: Bruce Riordan is a technical advisor. MCF contracted with him late last year to scan the landscape re: Who is doing what re sea level rise? Nona commented that there was a process consisting of many interviews, a roundtable, and focus groups. Nona was asked for her input during this process. There is a report available online, and MCF is now deciding what to do with the information it gathered. Among the areas addressed were Canal area and Marin City vulnerabilities.

Nona commented further that there will be a meeting on October 8 at 5:30 at the Mill Valley Community Center re the OWL simulators, which will now be going to Stinson Beach. This is a community dialogue hosted by the County. Climate Access will present. There will also be a Planning Commission meeting on September 28 at 1:00 on the Climate Action Plan.

ACTION ITEM: Write a policy ASAP re CCA support. We are forming a subcommittee for this purpose, consisting of Doug, Mary, Belle and Pam. They will ask Roger for his input. The subcommittee will address the purpose and focus of a meeting with the Mayors and Council members, after talking with Dana Armanino and Christina O'Rourke. They will base the CCA policy on our policy re AB 32, which may be found in MCL newsletters.

Reports

Dominican Climate Event: Belle reported on progress of the upcoming November 9 presentation at Dominican, 7 – 9 pm re Amping Up Climate Leadership. They now have a website, www.leadonclimate.org. The website describes the event, speakers, supporters, and allows people to purchase tickets. Re budget issues, they have figured out the number of tickets they must sell, although no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Dominican currently has a coordinated, multi-program focus on climate, and they will try to get students involved. We should also focus on students at College of Marin and county high schools, especially those in Terra Linda High School's environmental leadership program.

The event presenters now have 10 organizational partners and 20 supporters. Belle mentioned that MCE is a "supporter." [MCL is a "partner."] In contrast to the very limited physical space available for "tabling," every organization will have an opportunity to place a statement of "who they are" on the website.

Working groups have been formed to address outreach, social media, venues, and other issues. They are working on handouts, and a form that says, "These are the organizations you should sign up for," in which the partnering and supporting organizations will have an opportunity to say important things about themselves. They will also have professionally prepared flyers for the event.

Expectation for MCL is to work as a team and get as many people as possible to attend the event. They need a written blurb on how sponsors should get the word out to their membership.

This event has implications for leadership at the local, state, national, and global level. Political will is the underlying issue. The tagline is “political will to support action on climate change.” A statement is needed as to why this important issue has been neglected.

They are working on the issue of how best to publicize this event. **To do:** Mary and Heather will help to broadcast flyers.

Resilient Neighborhoods: Doug and Pam reported for Tamra. MCE received a grant for community organizing. Some of MCE’s proposed activities for community organizing would have conflicted with and potentially undermined Resilient Neighborhoods’ ongoing, successful efforts—for example, a contest re community efforts which did require any proof that contestants were actually doing something. Resilient Neighborhoods connected with the right people at MCE, and they will be discussing how the two organizations can mesh their efforts.

Community Marin: Nona reported for Rick. Nona noted the historical role of Community Marin and instigator Marge Macris in following on documentation, taking up initiatives, and coordinated planning for sea level rise. Community Marin is a joint project of MCL and other environmental organizations. The group was formed when there was an obvious need for coordinated environmental planning. Nona reported that Community Marin met with the Board of Supervisors, staff, and the County regarding the County taking leadership on the issue of sea level rise. The County is now in a position to do so, having received \$500,000 in funding for vulnerability assessment.

Pam noted the need to approach City people, and particularly DPW.

Water and Watersheds Committee: Nona reported for Ann Thomas. The committee will present its next speaker on October 29. The speaker is Warner Chabot, who will address sea level rise. Chabot has been active on coastal issues for many years and is married to Felecia Marcus. The presentation will take place in Larkspur at 4:00 or 4:30.

Main Street Moms: Mary reported on the all-day advocacy training session with MCE last Tuesday. There were approximately 20 attendees, including people from Benicia, Richmond, Vallejo, San Mateo, San Anselmo, Fairfax, and a staff person from Resilient Neighborhoods. The training was excellent, entailing lots of MCE effort, and Allison Hang is 100% committed to working with community advocates. Mary noted that the MCE bureaucracy is young and willing to work with the community. In the future, MCE tablers will be better trained.

There is a page on the MCE website that includes the training, and they will form a Google group.

The Moms will extend their campaign in West Marin to smaller areas not previously touched. The Moms hope that people in East Marin will also take up the effort. MCL people power and credibility makes a difference.

Announcements

The next CAWG meeting will be on October 16 (we are back on the third Friday schedule). The following meeting will be on November 20. We hope to have Tori Estrada as a speaker.

The MCL Ag Land Use committee is partnering with the CAWG on a public presentation about carbon sequestration on rangeland, a conversation with Tori Estrada of the Carbon Cycle Institute. Heather suggested that people should be able to get simple, lay questions answered. It was suggested that having an event in southern Marin would help to draw in a different audience. Carbon is sequestered in a different way in marshland, and the event would have to be framed around the target audience and address the pertinent cost-benefit analysis. It was noted that the film “Cowspiracy” addresses myths about problems presented by rangeland. The huge problems they present now do not preclude them from being a huge solution in the future. We need a comprehensive life-cycle analysis of nitrogen as well as carbon.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:05.