

MEEKS BAY RESTORATION PROJECT STAKEHOLDER FORUM

Virtual Meeting #4 | December 9, 2020 (9 am - 12 noon)

Meeting Summary

Meeting Purpose

- Present and seek input on revised project alternatives.
- Solicit revisions and additions to project Frequently Asked Questions.
- Build understanding of how environmental review of project alternatives will be undertaken.

Welcome, Zoom Overview, Agenda Review, Introductions & House Keeping

Austin McInerney, facilitator from the Consensus Building Institute, welcomed participants to the fourth meeting of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project Stakeholder Forum. Note: Forum meeting attendance is shown in Appendix A at the end of this document.

The presentation and group discussion portion of today's meeting was recorded and is available for viewing [here](#).

Summary of Significant Developments Since Last Forum Meeting

Rebecca Cremeen from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency provided an overview of the significant developments since the last Forum meeting. Specifically, she explained that the Project Development Team has looked more closely at:

- Type and scale of infrastructure that could be feasible;
- Focus on restoration objectives;
- Economic and operational viability of marina;
- Relationship to other plans (89 Corridor) and agency objectives (State Parks and Fire Districts); and
- Status of marina moorings and requirements under Shoreline Plan.

Ms. Cremeen also reported that meetings with the following groups have been held since last Forum meeting:

- US Forest Service Interdisciplinary Team;
- US Forest Service and TRPA Leadership; and
- Meeks Bay Fire District and California State Parks.

Lastly, she reported that the project frequently asked questions document has been updated to respond to questions that have been received regarding the following:

- Pier design/management
- Moorings

- Interpretation/education
- Marina effects on ecosystem restoration objectives and AIS
- Final project selection
- Public safety
- Upland amenities at the campground and day use areas

Refined Preliminary Alternative Presentation

Mr. Lewandowski from Ascent Environmental provided an overview of how each preliminary alternative theme diagram has been developed based on collective input received to date and how relevant physical, legal and technical site constraints have been considered during the alternative development process. For each of the three alternative themes, Lewandowski reviewed input from last Forum meeting and the public workshop, shared the design constraints, and presented the refined preliminary designs. For those wanting to review the consolidated input diagrams and to hear Mr. Lewandowski's detailed explanation of each alternative theme, please listen to the [recording of the meeting](#) and see the presentation (available on the project website).

Mr. Lewandowski explained that the partial marina alternative has been considered extensively and has been determined to not allow for full restoration, which is the primary purpose of the project. Furthermore, the partial marina is deemed too not be financially feasible due to:

- High cost of construction;
- Ongoing operation costs;
- Limited revenue (20 – 40 slips); and
- Difficult to identify marina operator.

Based on the analysis to date, the Project Development Team has decided to not evaluate a partial marina alternative and, instead, focus energy on a new alternative with a pedestrian pier while also evaluating the continuation of full marina operations as part of the No Action Alternative. It was also explained that none of the alternatives would include mooring buoys, a motorized boat ramp nor a partial marina.

The Forum was then presented with a summary table highlighting the key differences between the alternatives and a table presenting the common features (see Appendix B).

Break-Out Group Activity and Summary of Ideas Generated

Following a short break, meeting attendees were separated into three breakout groups to brainstorm design approaches and other key considerations in developing project alternatives. Each group was asked to focus on the following:

Pedestrian Pier Alternative (Pier Location and Design):

- What is the best location for a pedestrian pier?
- What uses should the pier accommodate?

- Are there other pier design features that should be considered?

Pedestrian Pier Alternative (*Upland Design*):

- Are there types of campsites that should be emphasized, added, or increased?
- Are there amenities that would make the day use experience more enjoyable?
- Are there other design features that would improve use of the site?

After the time spent in separate discussions, each group reported to the full meeting and the input received is consolidated and presented below:

Pedestrian Pier

- Put it towards (short term (10-20 min.) parking area for elderly those with accessibility issues
 - Maybe near snack shack
 - Concerned about accessible parking
- For viewing, but not for beachgoers
- Parking and circulation will be changed up, but there will be a drop-off, and accessible parking
- Traditionally pier went out near snack shack, length should be usable on low water year, no need to step on sand
- Floating pier or piling pier – open for discussion
 - Floating – easier for kayaks/non-motorized, less visible
 - Could be a combination – water level access and standing
 - Designed to meet historic Meeks Bay vibe – people with accessibility issues cannot navigate a floating pedestrian pier thus defeating the purpose of having a pedestrian pier.
 - Fixed pier with floating component could work
 - Pier would not be designed to get out to navigable depth (would be longer for a boating pier)
 - Still some members confused about why it can't be both
- I don't think a fire boat should be top priority for Meeks Bay project; may be more appropriate place for this equipment.
- Same spot that they wanted to put the boat ramp? Snack shack in the middle of the bay? Central location.
- Are there more ADA issues if you locate the pier on one end or the other of the beach? Is the pier generally less accessible if it is located at one end or the other?
- Consensus that the pier should be located in the center of the recreation area (near snack shack and would be accessible by both sides of beach)
- Pedestrian piers are very popular facilities that are well used, and it is difficult to manage visitation. State Parks notes that this is an underserved use at the lake and would likely prove very popular.
- Floating pier as a concept. Does not need to extend very far and would be a more accessible option than a stationary pier.
- What types of uses should it NOT service? What types of uses should it service?

- Swimming
- Access for non-motorized boaters from the water
- Benches or places to sit
- Connectivity with bike path for people to stop along the way
- The farther north the pier goes, the shallower the water is, and this may present use/design challenges.
- Regarding Theme 3: We assume the non-motorized launch ramp would not preclude people from launching off other areas of the beach as is currently done, correct?
- We don't feel that it's essential for the restoration project and that we don't know that there's a benefit to putting a pier in. However, if it was determined there was some sort of necessity for it, it would possibly be more towards the elderly or handicapped access and we agreed with group one, that it should be over by the Shack, where the handicapped access already has been provided.
- We did not discuss whether floating was a good option. We agreed with the resort side that it could extend from the handicap access to the handicapped parking area.
- And it could allow for emergency access if somebody out on the water had an issue, they could bring somebody in and an emergency.
- We did agree with no motorized and no docking.

Upland Design

- One or two bridges? – pedestrian/bike bridge where creek enters lagoon where it was traditionally; inside the fence
- Caltrans most likely not considering bridge that accommodates bike path; if there's not a bridge accommodated on highway, this would accompany the project
- Want to see more tents and yurts expanded
- Concerns with proposed reconfigured parking, especially with people hauling things
- Tribe would like to see a reconfiguration of the resort area:
 - Parking moved to south end of the campground
 - More space in the campground area than other parts of the resort for parking and access to a pedestrian pier
- There is a lot of accommodation for RV camping already at CA State Parks campgrounds north of Meeks Bay (70-75% of 4,000 campsites accommodate RVs)
- RV camping on the whole in the decline among younger people.
- We spent a lot of time talking about the campgrounds and the reconfiguration and we two agreed that there should be a separation of camping types with the south side providing smaller sites while the north side would provide larger sites with utilities and power and all that.
- On the north side separate those two for noise.
- We also discussed the concern with the day us parking on the south side some, some folks liked having that being relocated. Some prefer it where it is now. And that separation, as well as a separation between the lagoon, and the campground to prevent and unintended problems nuisances with kids and potential drownings and things like that. When parents are paying attention.

- And we also like the, the idea of people being able to come in with their small non-motorized craft to camp and the campgrounds and have those storage racks, where their boats and people can put their kayaks and paddle boards off the lake out of view of the lake, but it could have a storage area for that, and I think I covered most of it.

Next Steps in Environmental Review

Mr. Lewandowski reviewed the upcoming activities that will be undertaken to complete a detailed environmental analysis of the proposed alternatives:

- Public Workshop and TRPA hearing on alternatives (Jan. 2021)
- Prepare specialist reports and preliminary analysis (Jan. – April 2021)
- Next stakeholder forum meeting (Spring 2021)
- Prepare Draft EIR/EIS/EIS (April – Oct. 2021)
- Public review period for Draft EIR/EIS/EIS (Oct. – Nov. 2021)

He further explained that the environmental analysis will cover the following topics:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Recreation | • Air Quality |
| • Scenic Resources | • Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change |
| • Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources | • Public Safety |
| • Terrestrial Biological Resources | • Noise |
| • Aquatic Biological Resources | • Transportation and Circulation |
| • Hydrology and Water Quality | • Land Use |
| • Geology, Soils, and Land Coverage | |

Following the presentation, meeting attendees were asked to weigh in on the following questions:

- What potential environmental effects of the alternatives are you most concerned about?
- Are there additional environmental topics that should be considered?
- Are there specific ways the alternatives could negatively affect peoples' experience or the natural environment in and around Meeks?
- How should we structure the January 7th public workshop?

Meeting attendees offered the following in response:

- Will alternatives analyze noise? Would like to see how to mitigate noise while keeping day use on south side.
- Is it possible as part of the analysis to include a modified or partial marina as a mitigated alternative?
- Why has there been no mention of an environmentally friendly marina?

- Public Workshop Format:
 - Would like to see a figure of the No Action alternative
 - Approx. size information/specs for a boating pier vs. pedestrian pier (we understand this will ultimately be determined by site-specific factors, but a relative idea would be helpful). Pictures of other public piers around the lake would also be helpful.
 - Estimated sizes and example images to reflect the proposed non-motorized launch.
 - I think you should basically do the same thing for the public as you have been doing for the stakeholder group – evolution of alternatives based on constraints and project goals and priorities, and the breakout group structure. I liked the round-robin version we did in the last meeting. If there is really big attendance, it should still work because you can make a lot of smaller groups.
 - More concrete examples of things like pedestrian pier, nonmotorized launch, the restoration project itself, etc., without making it seem pre-determined (e.g., show examples from other places as thought exercises, not as actual proposals).

Next Steps & Closing Remarks

Mr. McNerny presented the following next steps and adjourned the meeting:

Forum Members:

- Review today's meeting summary when sent out
- Confer with your constituents to prepare for next forum meeting
- Help spread word about upcoming January 7 public workshop

Members of the Public and Interested Parties:

- Make sure we have your email address if you are not already on the project list: please enter your name and contact info in the chat box
- Stay tuned for information and details on the January 7 public workshop
- Follow @TahoeAgency and track website to keep informed

Appendix A: Stakeholder Forum Meeting Attendance

Affiliation	Representative	Mtg #1	Mtg #2	Mtg #3	Mtg #4
Woodland Pier Association	Bill Anson / Kent Ramos		*	*	*
Lake Tahoe Water Trail	Becky Bell	*	*	N/A	N/A
Tahoe Lakefront Owners Association	Jan Brisco / Drew Briner	*	*	*	*
Meeks Bay Vista Property Owners Association	Tony Evans / Dave Coward	*	*	*	*
League to Save Lake Tahoe	Gavin Feiger / Jesse Patterson	*	*	*	*
Washoe Tribe Cultural/ Language Department	Herman Fillmore	*		*	
West Shore Community Member	Julie Hutchinson / Daret Kehlet	*	*	*	*
Washoe Tribe Office of Environmental Protection	Susan Jamerson / Rhiana Jones	*	*	*	*
Meeks Bay Yacht Club	Steve Matles / John Gallagher	*	*	*	*
Meeks Bay Fire District	Steve McNamara / Steve Leighton	*		*	*
Lake Tahoe Marina Association	Jim Phelan / Bob Hassett	*	*	*	*
Friends of the West Shore	Jennifer Quashnick / Judith Tornese	*	*	*	*
Washoe Tribe Meeks Bay Resort	Rueben A. Vasquez			*	

Additionally, Courtney Rowe from California State Parks and the alternate representatives from the Meeks Bay Vista Property Owners Association, Friends of the West Shore and the West Shore Community Member At-Large were in attendance along with a few members of the public (Kent Robinson, Steve Teshara, Ellie Beals and Bertie Freeberg). Note: only those who provided their names in the Zoom chat box are shown as attending and new participants have been added to the project mailing list.

Appendix B: Alternatives Comparison

Key Differences

Alternative Features	Alternative 1 – Full restoration with boating pier	Alternative 2 - Full restoration with pedestrian pier	Alternative 3 – Full restoration with no pier	No Action Alternative
Pier	Central pier for boating and pedestrian access. Include one lift that can accommodate a fire boat	Pier for pedestrian access	No pier	No pier
Campgrounds ¹	Reconfigure campgrounds with no change in number of sites	TBD	Reconfigure and expand campgrounds. Separate tent and RV sites	No change to campgrounds
Day use on south side ¹	Reconfigured and expanded day use area	TBD	Reconfigured day use area	No change
Parking on north side ¹	Expanded parking	TBD	Expanded parking	No change
Parking on south side ¹	No change	TBD	Parking expanded and relocated away from beach with drop off	No change
Cabins on north end of beach	Relocate one building to extend beach area	No change		
Non-motorized access features	Paddlecraft storage at south end		Accessible paddlecraft launch and storage facility at south end	No change

¹Design of campgrounds, day use areas, and parking could be similar across alternatives

Common Features

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