



## Lake Hodges Community Landscape Committee Meeting #1 Summary

**Date:** September 08, 2007

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Meeting Location:** Del Dios Fire Station  
20155 Elm Lane  
Escondido, CA 92029

### **Attendance:**

#### Committee Members Present

Suzette Amon, Del Dios community member  
Joe Ferguson, Del Dios community member  
Peter Jones, San Diego Windsurf Association  
Dave Risoff, Lake Hodges Hills community member  
Georgie Birch, Lake Hodges Native Plant Club

#### Committee Members Absent

Mike Kratz, Del Dios community member

#### Water Authority Staff

Randy Huber  
Gina Molise  
Scott Robinson  
Kelly Rodgers

#### Staff Resources

Jessica Berlin, Katz & Associates  
Dick Rol, Foothill Associates

#### Audience Members

Donnie Speer, Del Dios Town Council chair  
Elvin James, Del Dios resident

### **Presentation Summary:**

Jessica Berlin welcomed everyone and thanked them for their participation on the Lake Hodges Community Landscape Committee. Water Authority staff, consultants, landscape committee members, and audience members introduced themselves.

After introductions, Senior Public Affairs Representative Gina Molise provided an overview of the Water Authority. The Water Authority is a public agency serving the San Diego region as a wholesale supplier of water and it works through its 24 member agencies to provide a safe, reliable water supply to

support the region's \$150 billion economy and the quality of life of 3 million residents. Molise also explained how the Emergency Storage Project is a system of reservoirs, interconnected pipelines, and pumping stations designed to make water available to the San Diego region in the event of an interruption in imported water deliveries.

Following Molise's presentation, Senior Engineering Technician Randy Huber provided a detailed operational overview of the Lake Hodges Projects. Huber explained how the project components—the Lake Hodges to Olivenhain pipeline tunnel, pump station, inlet/outlet pipeline, inlet/outlet structure, and the SDG&E transmission line and switchyard—work together to provide additional water storage and hydroelectric power.

Engineer PE Kelly Rodgers, the Lake Hodges project manager, presented the project construction schedule, summarized its benefits and identified the project partners. Rodgers explained that construction of the Lake Hodges to Olivenhain Pipeline started in summer 2005 and was completed in spring 2007. It connects the city of San Diego's Hodges Reservoir with the Water Authority's Olivenhain Reservoir. Rodgers also explained that the connection will provide the ability to store 20,000 acre-feet of water at Hodges Reservoir for emergency use. The connection will also allow water from Hodges, which can currently serve only the Santa Fe Irrigation and San Dieguito Water districts, to be made available for use throughout the region.

Additionally, the projects will help keep Hodges Reservoir at a more consistent level during dry seasons, and provide the ability to capture water before it spills over the Hodges Dam during rainy seasons. During the transfer of water from Olivenhain Reservoir downhill to Hodges Reservoir, the Lake Hodges Projects will also generate 40 megawatts of peak hydroelectric energy – enough power to annually sustain nearly 26,000 homes.

Rodgers indicated that the project partners are the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority, city of San Diego, San Diego Gas & Electric, and the Water Authority. Rodgers added that the partners provided individual input that was incorporated into the committee guidelines. Rodgers also discussed how the committee will provide community input for the landscape architect to incorporate into the design and development of the landscaping for the project site. Afterwards, Rodgers detailed the location of the landscaping areas that are located in sections surrounding the Lake Hodges Pump Station building site, along the Coast to Crest Trail within the project site, and at the windsurfer parking lot just south of the pump station.

After Rodgers' presentation, Landscape Architect Dick Rol updated the committee on his background experience and the project's landscaping methodology that will help ensure environmental correctness, a context-sensitive design, and a collaborative and inclusive design process. Rol outlined the context needed in producing a successful landscape design, which includes the visibility of the landscaping areas from the neighboring communities and the lake, the existing native habitats at Lake Hodges, and future recreational uses.

Rol also discussed diagrams that demonstrated the three landscaping locations, as well as presenting the Coastal Sage Scrub mix currently hydroseeded near the Lake Hodges Pump Station. He recommended the use of native plants as part of the landscape plan, and showed plant palettes with sample trees and tall and low shrubs that are native to the habitat of the landscaping areas.

Molise closed the presentation by providing an overview of the committee's timeline and objectives for each meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for September 27 at 6 p.m. to discuss and review the

community input collected by the committee members. The third meeting will be on November 1 at 6 p.m. where the project team will present the proposed landscape design incorporating the input from the first and second meetings. If needed, a fourth and final meeting will be held on December 6 at 6 p.m. Molise concluded her presentation by opening a roundtable discussion to identify the committee members' recommendations for the landscaping design. After the roundtable discussion, the committee members toured the project site to orient them to the projects' landscaping areas.

#### **Initial Landscape Committee Recommendations:**

- Screen structures with coastal live oak—as many trees as possible to hide the buildings
- Investigate irrigation options
- Modify the hydroseed mix according to specific location to ensure maximum wildlife habitat, and ensure maximum survival rate of the germinating hydroseed
- Establish habitat for wildlife
- Plant trees at the parking lot—provide shade along the shoreline
- Return the parking lot areas to natives
- Leave room between the trees at the parking lot for windsurfing boards to be carried to shore
- Reconfigure the rocks around the windsurfing area and clear the beach
- Restore wildflowers along Lake Drive (i.e. indian paintbrush and shooting star)
- Maximize survival of plantings
- Use pine or oak mulch around trees
- Use shredded mulch at plant bases
- Use local "A-1 Soils" to support local businesses
- Import Gorilla Hair mulch
- Allow community to review specifications for the landscape contractor
- Focus funds and efforts on a visual buffer outside the security fence
- Relocate security fence located along Lake Drive (to west side of berm)
- Examine the grading plans to identify moisture areas capable of supporting sycamores
- Focus on long term outcome instead of the short term results
- Provide topsoil that can support plants
- Provide the parking lot grading plan

#### **Summary or Questions, Answers, & Comments**

This section is a summary of the answers, questions, and comments presented during the landscape meeting, roundtable discussion, and tour. Where noted, clarification is given to responses provided during the meeting/tour.

Q=Question    A=Answer    C=Comment

1. Q. Why is the city of San Diego not represented on this landscape committee?

A. The city of San Diego, San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority, and Water Authority Operations and Maintenance Department, are all partners supporting the landscape committee and provided individual input that was incorporated into the committee guidelines. They will participate in reviewing the committee recommendations.

2. Q. Is Landscape Architect Dick Rol from Foothill Associates considered an independent contractor and will he have complete autonomy in forming the landscape plan?

A. The landscape architect is a Water Authority consultant. He will respond to the needs of the Water Authority and adhere to the scope of work provided in his contract. The scope of work includes having an open communication with the community and incorporating their input as much as possible to design and produce the landscape for the Lake Hodges Projects.

3. Q. How can the landscape committee members communicate with the landscape architect?

A. The landscape committee members can communicate with the landscape architect through Public Affairs Representative Scott Robinson. He will be the landscape committee's primary point of contact and can be reached at (858) 522-6705 or [srobinson@sdewa.org](mailto:srobinson@sdewa.org).

4. Q. What is the "IID"?

A. Imperial Irrigation District.

**Note:** The Imperial Irrigation District is a community-owned utility that provides electric power and irrigation water to the Imperial Valley

5. Q. Is the Water Authority developing the desalination plant on the grounds of the Encina Power Station?

A. No. Poseidon Resources Inc. is privately developing the desalination plant that will produce water for San Diego County water agencies. The Water Authority's board of directors is supporting the project.

6. Q. Where is the desalination plant in the environmental process?

A. Poseidon Resources Inc. has a certified Environmental Impact Report and will be seeking a Coastal Commission permit by in the near future.

7. Q. What are the names of the major fault lines that cross the Water Authority's pipelines?

A. The major fault lines that cross pipelines delivering water to our region are the San Jacinto, San Andreas, and Elsinore faults.

8. C. The location of the Lake Hodges Projects construction site used to be called Raptor Ridge because it was a raptor habitat.

9. C. Raptors are still located in the area. The construction crews saw a red-tailed hawk last week.

10. Q. What is the percentage of the hydroseed mix currently being used at the project site?

A. The Water Authority will provide the hydroseed mix percentage at the second meeting.

11. Q. Can we add new items to the hydroseed mix?

A. Yes

**Note:** The project team will need to look at community suggestions about the hydroseed mix to see if they comply with the environmental documents for the projects.

12. Q. What kind of wildlife does the pump station hydroseed mix support?
- A. The mix supports a wide variety of insects, small rodents, birds, squirrels, rabbits, small mammals, butterflies, and pollinators.  
**Note:** The hydroseed mix is specifically designed to promote the California Gnatcatcher.
13. Q. Is it possible to add container plants or plugs to current and/or future hydroseeded areas?
- A. Yes.
14. Q. If there are container plants or plugs located within the hydroseeded areas, can they be native?
- A. Yes
15. Q. What is the failure rate for container plants?
- A. Relatively high. The two-inch plugs have a 25 percent failure rate. Seed and container plant failure rates are incorporated into the design to ensure optimum results.
16. Q. What is the difference in success between large and small container plants?
- A. Smaller plants tend to have a higher survival rate.
17. Q. Can we place any screening plants on the east side of the pump station berm?
- A. The project team would have to evaluate the type of plant and its placement to determine if this complies with the Water Authority's security requirements.
18. Q. Can the Water Authority provide topography of the switchyard pad elevation and its berm elevation?
- A. The computer modeling that Landscape Architect Dick Rol is preparing may be more helpful than the topography maps in visualizing elevations. The Water Authority will provide the models during the next meeting.
19. Q. Will placing a sycamore tree near the pump station help hide the building?
- A. The use of self-sustaining plants is ideal, and sycamores require an abundance of water. Numerous variables have to be examined to know if sycamores are appropriate.  
**Note:** This includes examining the current soil conditions, preparing the site, making use of the salvaged topsoil, and ensuring tree placement is conducted during optimum growing seasons. Security will need to be considered when planting the trees.
20. Q. When is the landscape construction scheduled to start?
- A. Approximately January 2009
21. What trees can be placed on a berm?

A. Given all the parameters, the introduction of non-native trees would be difficult at best. We'll take committee input into consideration on this item.

22. Q. What are the security requirements?

A. The project team will research this question.

**Note:** The Water Authority's security requirements are located on the first section of each committee member's binder, on page 2 of the Lake Hodges Landscape Committee guidelines.

23. Q. Where is San Diego Gas & Electric's switchyard fence line?

A. The SDG&E fence line surrounds their switchyard.

**Note:** The project team will show a schematic of the fence line during the second landscape committee meeting.

24. Q. What will the fence height be?

A. Approximately eight feet

25. Q. Will the fence contain razor wire?

A. No. The top of the fence will have three strands of masted barbed wire.

26. Q. Will the fence affect the local raptors?

A. It is not anticipated to affect the raptors.

27. Q. What is the landscape construction budget?

A. \$350,000

28. Q. Can landscape committee members receive a copy of the landscaping contract documents prior to issuing the contract?

A. Yes.

**Note:** The committee may receive a copy when the project advertises.

29. Q. Does the landscaping budget include maintenance?

A. Yes, the budget includes a 3-year maintenance agreement.

30. Q. Does the city of San Diego have oversight of the landscaping budget?

A. In February 2006, the Water Authority's 35 board members approved the project budget, which included this landscape work. As a Water Authority board member holding ten seats, the city of San Diego has indirect oversight on the project. The Water Authority staff is responsible for managing the project budget.

31. Q. Can drip irrigation be incorporated into the landscape plan?
- A. Permanent irrigation is not planned.
32. Q. Why does the pump station facility lack a domestic water supply?
- A. The pump station will be a stand-alone, unstaffed facility and does not require a domestic water supply or sewer. There are no potable water supply or sewer facilities near the project site.
33. Q. What kind of grading material is currently available at the site?
- A. Shot rock, gravel, and broken rock are available and were extracted from the pump station excavation. The conglomerate materials are mainly blue granite.
34. Q. Where is the Water Authority getting the gravel used at the city of San Diego parking lot located near the old windsurfing area?
- A. The Water Authority uses onsite gravel generated from the excavation of the pump station pit at the site.
- Note:** The onsite gravel was also generated from the pipeline tunnel excavation.
35. Q. Can the landscape committee members receive periodic budget updates?
- A. Yes.
36. Q. At the parking lot area, what is the Water Authority's plan for the invasive non-native eucalyptus trees?
- A. The Water Authority does not have plans to remove the eucalyptus trees.
37. Q. What is the minimum distance between the placements of each shade tree?
- A. In general, trees should be no closer than 8-10 feet, but typically would be placed 15-20 feet apart. Closer spacing is sometimes used in situations where high mortality rates are expected.
38. Q. Who is the owner of the parking lot area?
- A. The city of San Diego owns the parking lot area and leases it to the Water Authority during the construction of the projects. As part of the lease agreement, the Water Authority will restore the parking lot with enough parking spots for 50 cars, allowing for circulation.
39. Q. How is access to the wind surfing area regulated?
- A. Peter Jones stated that access to the wind surfing area is regulated by an agreement between the city of San Diego and the San Diego Windsurf Association.
40. Q. What is the plan for the windsurfing area?

A. The windsurfing area will remain at its previous location.

41. Q. Can the rocks located the windsurfing area be reconfigured?

A. Committee members suggested the windsurfing association take on this task.

42. Q. Is the use of mulch recommended?

A. It is not recommended for general use throughout the entire planting area. It can be beneficial when used directly around container plants. Rock mulch can be as effective, or more effective, than bark mulch.

43. C. The use of oak mulch would be wonderful.

44. Q. Are palo verde trees native?

A. The palo verde trees are not native to Lake Hodges.

45. Q. Why not use one-gallon container plants rather than plug-ins?

A. Plug-ins are easier, cheaper, and faster to plant.

46. Q. Do the contract specifications state a required survival rate?

A. Yes.

47. Q. Can we use Pre-emerge herbicides?

A. Pre-emergence herbicides would not be advisable, given that hydroseeding is part of the revegetation strategy, and given that the salvaged and replaced topsoil holds a large native seed bank that is expected to assist in successful replanting.

48. Q. Can the landscape schedule be adjusted to ensure that planting occurs during the rainy season to optimize success?

A. Yes. The Lake Hodges project is on schedule and we expect to be ready for landscaping during the rainy season. If this schedule should slip for any reason, we would adjust the landscape schedule to coincide with the rainy season.

### **Follow-up Questions**

This section contains questions from the first Lake Hodges Community Landscape Committee meeting for subsequent research by the project team. The answers to these questions will be provided during the second committee meeting.

1. Q. Who has oversight over Poseidon Resources Inc. producing water for public consumption?
2. Q. Can we incorporate appropriate non-native species?
3. Q. What are the drawing elevations of the berms along Lake Drive?
4. Q. Can we kill the eucalyptus trees to prevent them from re-growing?
5. Q. What is the original grade of the parking lot area?
6. Q. Can we relocate the fence line on the berm, currently planned for installation on the east side near Lake Drive, to the west side of the berm?