



Meeting Notes

Dunes Collaborative

Thursday, March 11th, 2010

9:00 am to Noon

Dunes Center

1055 Guadalupe Street, Guadalupe, CA 93434

Co-Chairs: Kaila Dettman kailad@lcslo.org and

Rey Monge rmong@parks.ca.gov

1. Introductions/Opening Remarks:

Daniel Bohlman, Kaila Dettman, Melissa Boggs, Mario Castellanos, John Jostes, Dan McElhinney, Rey Monge, Christina Holenda, Ronnie Glick

2. Review of Meeting Notes from February 11th, 2010 Dunes Collaborative Meeting

Action Item: Approved

3. Follow-up Presentation by Mario Castellanos of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center's Mission Expansion and Capacity Building Project

Mario Castellanos provided a budget summary of the Dunes Center's Mission Expansion and Capacity Building Project today. He also updated the Dunes Collaborative on the progress made towards specific deliverables outlined in the Scope of Work. The Dunes Center projects to serve 8,000 students in the 2009-2010 school year, exceeding goals set forth in the Scope of Work. The Dunes Center has had strong volunteer participation with 297 one time volunteers giving a total 938 hours and 36 ongoing volunteers giving 1135 hours.

4. Dunes Collaborative Annual Retreat

John Jostes reviewed all of the retreats from 2002 through 2009 and observed that there have been times when we focused primarily on structure and more recently, discussions which focused on budget and endowment issues. This latter set of issues has resulted in more focus on decision making issues and governance as the group has begun thinking about where it is going, how to operate in austere economic times, and how to proceed, given the limited endowment funds.

The discussion then turned to how the Collaborative views the importance of membership, commitments and roles and responsibilities associated with participation in the Collaborative. The group made the following observations regarding the benefits of membership in the Dunes Collaborative:

- Access to information, experts and a larger network of land managers, scientists, and community organization experts.
- Organizational feedback, clearinghouse for brainstorming, creative problem solving and networking opportunities.
- Shared resources for public outreach and education, including interpretive materials and maps.

- Partnering capacity for competitive advantage when approaching possible funders and institutions.
- Sharing of equipment and volunteer base for joint projects.
- Sharing of support in terms of coalition building, letters of support for project proposals to governmental and institutional funders and foundations, best practices, etc.
- Joint marketing and outreach capacity.
- Access to funding for restoration and visitor serving projects which have competitive advantages in addressing resource needs.

Participants noted that membership entails promotion of the Collaborative, regular attendance at meetings, a commitment of sufficient time to prepare, attend and follow up on commitments from meetings, as well as being present for votes on important issues. With regard to the roles and responsibilities associated with active membership, the group identified seven key aspects:

- Time commitment: 3-5 hrs./month for monthly meetings, preparation and follow-up.
- Regular attendance at monthly meetings: $\geq 75\%$ attendance by principals; have alternate attend if absent.
- Active participation in at least one task force or subcommittee.
- When interacting with organizations and institutions external to the Collaborative, actively promote programs and projects of the Collaborative as a whole and those of individual members when possible.
- Be sufficiently engaged to know when key decisions are coming up for a vote and prepare to participate constructively and vote.
- Participate in good faith and articulate levels of support or concern sufficiently early in the process to allow refinements to be made which address underlying issues and interests.
- When meeting participation on an important issue is not possible, convey perspectives, support and/or concerns to another member to ensure your views are raised and addressed by the group.

There was also discussion regarding the expanding role of the Collaborative to not only function as an advisory body to the Restoration Subcommittee, but also to actively pursue other alliances and partnerships in order to further the goals and mission of the group as stated in the recently updated Work Plan. Melissa Boggs expressed the opinion that these two roles are similar and complimentary. Others noted that there are multiple things that hold the group together. Endowment funds comprise one aspect and the threats to the dunes are another separate issue and managing those aspects together are a big part of what we do. The possibility of shared learning should be a strong co-benefit.

The discussion then turned to a review of past, present and future membership structure. John Jostes reminded the group that it has, in the past, been very effective in

dealing quite smoothly with the cycling in and out of members from the core Collaborative member organizations.

The group suggested that a new structure for membership should be developed to reflect not only roles and responsibilities discussed earlier in the meeting, but also to leverage the co-benefits as well. After reviewing a series of organizing questions regarding the topic, the Collaborative came to the general conclusion that membership should be expanded to include not only charter members, but also other interested organizations and members of the public and institutions. It came to the following general definitions of the various levels of membership as a starting point for discussion at the retreat.

Voting Member: Members specified within the Work Plan as having decision making authority on projects to be implemented and recommendations for the Restoration Subcommittee's action – governed by the current Operational Procedures and the adopted Work Plan; 70% - 75% attendance rate expected or extraordinary service on subcommittees and/or task forces.

Affiliate Member: Those interested parties with a direct or indirect interest within the dunes system who wish to contribute to the goals, objectives and mission of the Dunes Collaborative – individuals or representatives from organizations who regularly contribute to meetings, informed action, science and/or volunteer activities. This member class may include:

- Adjacent or nearby landowners with agricultural or ranching interests impacting or impacted by the Dunes System
- Representatives of local or regional governmental entities (e.g., RWQCB, OCSD, City of Santa Maria, Arroyo Grande, etc.)
- Scientists, educators, and/or technical experts who wish to collaborate and exchange information with the Collaborative on a reciprocal basis
- Representatives of business and/or industry with a nexus to conservation efforts, restoration initiatives and/or environmental education
- Representatives or employees of conservation organizations with direct or indirect linkages to conservation efforts, restoration initiatives and/or environmental education within the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes or areas with similar resource issues or constraints.

Observers and Guests: Those interested parties who derive value from attendance at Collaborative meetings, but who also are expected to interact and collaborate on matters of mutual interest.

- Major donors to Collaborative Member organizations (Dunes Center, Land Conservancy, etc.)
- Media Representatives (local papers, TV stations, documentarians and trade publications)
- Students pursuing high school, community college or university degrees who wish to contribute.

Beyond these issues, John indicated he would poll the group on other issues outside of the meeting itself so as to create an engaging agenda for the retreat and translate the group's perspectives into a new draft of the Collaborative Operating Procedures for review at the retreat.

Based upon the input received, the group decided that the morning session of the Retreat should be focused on matters specific to the core, charter members of the Collaborative, but that the afternoon session should be opened up for broader discussion and dialogue on external issues and initiatives. The group reaffirmed the Friday, April 23, 2010 date for the retreat with the morning session beginning at 9:00 am and the afternoon session beginning at 1:00 pm and lasting until 4:00.

5. Other Information, Announcements, and Updates

- a. DuneQuest 2010 Scheduled for Thursday May 6th, in Guadalupe and Friday, May 7th, in Morro Bay. Next planning meeting to be announced soon.
- b. Friday, April 2nd from 5pm-7pm, Open House at The Dunes Center, featuring local artists.
- c. Trailer Update, Glenn Greenwald has provided in-kind contributions to by paying for repairs and maintenance to the interpretive trailer. Heacock Trailer has provided in-kind support to this project as well.
- d. Other

6. Adjourn

Dunes Collaborative Retreat: Friday, April 23rd, 2010 from 9am to 4pm

Morning dedicated to discussion with voting members.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 8th, 2010