

10/20/20 – MFPC Meeting Notes ZOOM conference call

Attendees: Liana Orlandi (AIM), Bonnie Nielsen (UC Cooperative Extension, Marin), Cathryn Couch (CERES Community Project), David Lewis (UC Cooperative Extension, Marin), Felicia Chavez (Systems Thinking Marin), Julia Van Soelen Kim (UC Cooperative Extension, Marin), Heather Gilardi (Innovative Health Solutions), Jeff Creque (Carbon Cycle Institute and Marin Carbon Project), Jonathan Wachter (MALT), Juliette Martinez (American Heart Association), Lauren Klein (UC Cooperative Extension, Marin), Linda Jackson (Aging Action Initiative), Marchon Tatmon (SF-Marin Food Bank), Meg Davidson (SF-Marin Food Bank), Patricia Hickey (Carbon Cycle Institute), Pelayo Alvarez (), Reba Meigs (Innovative Health Solutions), Ryan Thayer (Marin County HHS), Sami Mericle (), Sarah Hobson (West Marin Fund), Wendy Tobiasson (citizen)

Introductions (Announcements at end of meeting) - Liana Orlandi

Presentations: Climate Action Plan, Agriculture Chapter (MALT, Marin RCD, Carbon Cycle Institute, UCCE/Marin County)

- with David Lewis (UCCE), Jeff Creque (Carbon Cycle Institute), Jonathan Wachter (MALT)

Background: MFPC has previously focused on Climate Change and its influence on the local food system and agriculture going forward.

What does a CAP do, and specifically the ag chapter?

- AB 32 passed by Gov Schwarzenegger meant that local jurisdictions needed to track emissions and come up with targets and goals to reduce these emissions. CAP is a way to do an emissions inventory and reduction plan. CAP to reduce emissions is not enough to reverse climate change, but is one avenue. We have long ago passed the point where reducing emissions will solve the climate problem - now we have to remove a significant percentage of the legacy load of CO₂ in the atmosphere. Ag is a significant sector of human activity with an incredible opportunity to capture CO₂ from the atmosphere. Ag is the only climate mitigation space in which real significant efforts can also deliver co-benefits (increased food and forage production, improved water quality and habitat, etc.). Keeping ag viable and increasing local food security are entwined.

David Lewis, UC Cooperative Extension **PRESENTATION**

- Local jurisdictions take up Climate Action Plan (CAP) to look at how the community with address greenhouse gas emissions (measures, implementations, targets, goals)
- Some targets asked of local entities by the state; local entities can aspire higher as well
- Marin is setting a higher target (50% reductions) than CA (40% reductions)
- Marin introduced an ag chapter in its 2015 CAP, which set the stage as a first step
- 2020 CAP is expanding the chapter on agriculture - The revised CAP sets a goal of reaching 30% of the acreage covered by a developed and implemented plan.
- CAP is an inventory of greenhouse gases and emissions from different sectors (variety of sectors are contributing, and as Marin writes its plan for the unincorporated parts of the County, ag contributes about 32%, verses 9% countywide

- Largely come from manure management (usually dairies), and a small amount from synthetic fertilizers
- 117,000 tons/year emitted by agriculture
- 2020 CAP received a planning grant from Department of Conservation
- 19 plans completed currently, up from 3 plans in 2015
- Full implementation of practices outlined in these 19 plans would see 11,000 tons of CO2 sequestration per year - or 10% of greenhouse gases emitted by ag in Marin
- Currently we are at about 8-9,000 tons sequestered - beginning to chip away
- 19 beneficial practices that have been vetted by research institutions and fed agencies
- Next question: if we could scale up across all Marin ag land, what is the potential?
- Stream restoration plan potential: measure how much carbon is in the sediment and soil, use mapping techniques to calculate the percentage of Marin streams are restored and could be restored (about 5,700 acres). If you were to do that restoration, over 20 years 1 million tons of greenhouse gases would be sequestered.

Jonathan Wachter, MALT

- Analysis of potential to scale up used a number of approaches to estimate full extent practices could be implemented across Marin
- Carbon farming plan potential: using windbreaks (average of 9 ft of windbreak per acre of ag land) = 426 acres of windbreak across the whole county. Scale this up by research-based sequestration factor = 1,900 metric tons of CO2 sequestration per year.

Jeff Creque, Carbon Cycle Institute

- Dairy plan potential: question of dairy manure management and emissions, and possibilities of reducing greenhouse gas emissions here. Looked at models that had been developed for CA dairies as well as other models. Combined manure handling strategies with other on-farm practices including composting, grazing management, and agroforestry to envision if Marin could work towards a carbon negative future.
- Marin's dairy industry is largely grass-based production, so it is in a good position to be producing carbon-neutral or carbon-negative dairy products.

Next Steps

- October 12 webinar on Climate Action Plan from the perspective of all sectors, available to review and provide public comment here: <https://www.marincounty.org/main/county-press-releases/press-releases/2020/cda-draftcap-100620>
- Provide any public comment in the month of October, because it will be finalized in November and put forth to BOS on December 8.

Discussion

- Food resiliency and how to create a complete cycle... Have there been soft calculations on the real cost of bringing so much of our food into Marin?
There are different scales of this work being done at the state and national level, as well as industry-specific (such as the carbon cost of producing a gallon of milk that is then distributed across the country). This group is working on the use of energy and the

emissions of food production in this specific region. Another group could work with an economist on this question of the real cost of local vs non-local food production and consumption.

- Having an ag chapter addressing the emissions mitigation potential is hoped to lift targets and goals beyond mere emissions reduction.
- Are there job creation opportunities that have been studied?
This group is not doing research on job work, but would be interesting.
- What about reducing meat consumption?
Marin's ag makeup and the highest and best use of soil and water resources: of the 180,000 acres in ag production, only 400 are in crops (due to limited water resources and cooler marine climate for longer grass growing season), making Marin predominantly a grazing livestock ag area. Majority of ag contribution to emissions is from conversion of forest to rangeland in south america. Our understanding of the global warming potential from livestock methane production is reduced - only persists in the atmosphere for 10-12 years. If we can reduce methane emissions from a dairy, we can essentially effect a reduction in global warming potential over time. Grass-based livestock farming has the potential to be a climate solution rather than part of the climate problem. When you pull animals off of grasslands, thatch builds up (a form of fire suppression).
- How 'small' do these solutions go? Urban Ag, for example?
This group's efforts focused on larger scale ag lands in unincorporated Marin, but many of the practices are applicable on smaller scale levels. Haven't quantified in urban drawdown opportunities, check Urban Sustainability Directors Network for this work.
- How are the windbreaks and restorations done: planted trees, seedlings? seeds?
Not prescribing specific planting in the CAP, but there are a variety of ways to implement the practices.
- Do windbreaks, in slowing wind, slow soil erosion, help sink carbon, etc?
Windbreaks are an excellent practice in that they deliver many services -- woody biomass of trees is a long lived carbon storage, their roots sink carbon, and the downwind effects can be tremendous (if you block wind in a water-limited landscape, you can significantly increase downwind plant yields).

How can MFPC be involved in this effort?

- Hopefully we've learned about yet another benefit of ag in Marin to give us more voice in the role of Marin's ag working lands, can add a nod to climate management
- This knowledge can help inform MFPC policy platform bucket on climate change and the food system
- Reach out to David (djllewis@ucanr.edu), Jeff (jcreque@carboncycle.org), or Johnathan (jwachter@malt.org) with any questions
- Watch Kiss the Ground to learn more about solutions

Policy Updates (Liana Orlandi & All)

- CFFN has made a commitment to put equity at the center of their work, which aligns with MFPC's endeavors to focus more on equity that we have in the past
- CFFN asked membership to vote on whether or not CFFN should take a stance on Props 15, 16, 17 and 22 - Approved

- Links to endorsement forms in email from Bonnie
- Does MFPC want to take further action at this time? Should MFPC be listed as endorsing each of Props 15, 16, and 17, and opposing Prop 22? **VOTE: approved**
- Steering Committee will submit the statements
- How did the 2020 Legislative season shake out for bills they were tracking (see email with chart)
 - AB 2043 (MFPC sent LOS) -- signed into law
 - AB 2054 (MFPC did not take a stand) -- vetoed by Gov
 - AB 3121 (MFPC did not take a stand) -- signed into law
 - AB 3073 -- signed into law
 - AB 1876 -- signed into law
- Latino Coalition for Healthy CA factsheet shared by Julia -- policy recs to increase food access and provide resources to communities impacted by Covid *more info on social media under #LatinxCovidFacts
- Yesterday CA announced \$60 million in new investments in emergency food from CARES Act relief fund (Marchon)
- P-EBT 2.0 rolling out - extend P-EBT to the end of the 2021 school year. New set of cards will be mailed out in the next coming weeks. (Marchon)

Council Business - Julia Van Soelen Kim

- Update on Black Lives Matter work -- continues each month. In addition to state props discussed, is there anything local we should be aware of surrounding racial or social justice? Can always email the Steering Committee with anything.
- Update on Policy Platform
- Recap what's next for the rest of 2020
 - November: redlining and implications on food access
 - December: Policy Platform, AIM permanent farmers market, year-end activities
There WILL be a December meeting on Tuesday 12/15, as the third Tuesday is 10 days prior to Christmas
- Potential education efforts for Marin residents about ag in Pt Reyes and in West Marin

Virtual meeting closed at 4:30 p.m.

Next virtual meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 17 from 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.