

Summary of the Community Advisory Work Group Meeting

March 26, 2024, 5 pm – 7 pm

Reynolds Desalination Facility

Topic: Recreational Opportunities at Sweetwater Reservoir

Presentation: General Information on Community Advisory Work Group (CAWG), Meeting Agenda (Principal Public Affairs Representative Gwyneth Shoecraft)

Presentation & Recap of Topic Discussion: Recreational Opportunities at Sweetwater Reservoir (Gwyneth Shoecraft & Land and Environmental Manager Israel Marquez) ([Presentation PDF](#))

- Current recreational opportunities: fishing, hiking & riding, birdwatching, horseback riding, picnicking, nature study
- Future/potential opportunities and recap of topics discussed at previous meeting:
 - Sweetwater Reservoir Recreational Area upgrades
 - Proposed shared access road/trail along shoreline
 - Sweetwater Reservoir Loop Trail System updates

Discussion & Q&A (CAWG attendees, Sweetwater Authority representatives)

- Areas of discussion; recommendations and feedback provided:
 - Sweetwater Reservoir Recreational Area upgrades, including discussion of costs and complexity for previously-suggested projects
 - Discussion of various trail boundaries, routes and whether there could be realignments
 - Questions as to who is the lead agency for fishing and recreation programs and whether there is an entity that manages or coordinates recreation areas around the reservoir
 - Marquez explained that Sweetwater Authority manages reservoir recreation on the agency's property. For other areas around the reservoir, including certain trails, the County of San Diego is the lead agency.
 - Discussion of potential future kayaking opportunities
 - Questions as to where kayaking boundaries could be, whether fishing from kayaks would be allowed
 - Discussion of need for Sweetwater Authority to own the kayaks
 - General Manager Quintero explained that users would likely not be able to bring in their own, due to potential issues regarding quagga mussels
 - Discussion of potential shading structure, benches and concessions locations
 - Question as to location of floating solar project as related to recreation area
 - Discussion of opening northside of reservoir for recreation
 - Discussion on current recreation plan, and need to update as a first step in determining budget and feasibility of discussed topics
 - Majority of attendees in favor of recommending updating the plan as a next step, and to share that feedback with the Board
 - Suggestion to include list of projects with cost estimates as part of plan
 - Questions as to budget and funding for projects
 - Suggestion of public/private partnerships and corporate sponsorships as potential funding sources

- Suggestion to view the agency as a business regarding recreation opportunities
- Quintero mentioned funding could be through rates, grants or other funding sources should the Board decide to proceed with any projects; however, further analysis through an update of the recreation plan is necessary to determine feasibility for any suggested projects
- Suggestions of additional recreational opportunities not previously discussed:
 - ADA-accessible loop nearby parking lot, with native plants and interpretive signs
 - Mention of potential funding sources as grants or County/State/Federal money for this type of project
 - Cabins for rent
 - Mention that solar could be put on roofs
 - Playground/structure with educational components incorporated
 - Observation/viewing area for birdwatching
 - Venue space for parties/weddings
- Discussion of proposed shared access road/trail along shoreline
- Sweetwater Reservoir Loop Trail System updates
 - Discussion of Segments 8 & 9
 - Marquez explained presenting a packet to DDW regarding operations and maintenance
 - Quintero emphasized County's willingness to participate in discussions
 - County of San Diego updates/discussion:
 - Timeline of full loop opening, challenges
 - Staging area on Lakeview Avenue
 - Suggestion that additional updates from County could be provided at a non-CAWG, County-led meeting
- Additional recommendations
 - Open access to shoreline from north side (Spring Valley)
 - Comment on lack of access as an environmental justice issue

Update on Loveland Trail Improvements (Gwyneth Shoecraft)

- Update that a second Community Workshop was held on March 14
- Mention of funding for trail project, need to submit plan to DWR
- Sweetwater Authority Board Chair to report out at March 27 Board Meeting

What's on Your Mind? (CAWG attendees, Sweetwater Authority representatives)

- Request to change date of meeting, discussion on previous consensus for current schedule
- Mention of fire insurance and for the community to consider how they all are mitigating risk
- Discussion of capturing storm water, diverting to the reservoir
 - Discussion of URDS system to maintain water quality