

Urban Water Partnership Meeting

Caño Martín Peña, San Juan, PR

July 2, 2015

Meeting Notes

I. Participants

Refer to Attachment 1 for list of participants.

II. Welcoming remarks

Ingrid Vila, Urban Water Ambassador (UWA) and Judith Enck, Region 2 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator offered welcoming remarks to meeting participants. Ingrid Vila offered a brief background on the Urban Water Partnership, its vision and principles while Judith Enck encouraged participants to fully engage in the Caño Martín Peña efforts.

III. Caño Martín Peña update

- a. Lyvia Rodríguez, Executive Director for Proyecto Enlace (Enlace), presented a brief video about the Caño Martín Peña and conditions experienced by residents. She then proceeded to present an update of dredging initiatives, infrastructure projects and plans as well as economic and social development efforts.
- b. Carlos Muñiz, from Enlace, provided an update on the Urban Water Grant for the Buena Vista Santurce, Storm Sewer Planning Project (EPA Urban Waters Small Grant No. 96283801)

Scope of work: Enlace is proposing the design of a conceptual plan for a new storm water drainage system with the active participation and involvement of the community that includes recommendations and cost estimates, and that incorporates results from several environmental analysis. The community is part of the “Caño Martín Peña” Special Planning District. Project development will require performing the following tasks: (1) Development of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), (2) Development of a sub-soil exploration program for geotechnical recommendations, (3) Preparation of a citizen participation program, (4) Analysis of “green” storm water management alternatives, (5) Soil sampling and testing program for pollutants, (6) Water quality sampling program, (7) Analysis and evaluation of existing storm sewer system conditions, (8) Analysis of three storm system alternatives including the preparation of cost estimates, (9) Preparation of final report and conceptual design for recommended storm sewer system alternative.

Status: The project Grant Agreement and award notification was received by Enlace on September 25, 2014. In order to meet the objectives and goals established for the proposed project, Enlace prepared and issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) (SDP 2015-003). Project commencement was delayed by the

consultant selection process; nevertheless this process has been overcome and service providers have been selected for the project. Enlace submitted to the EPA Project Officer a time extension request since the project period expires on June 30, 2015. In compliance with the Grant-specific programmatic conditions, Enlace has participated in the training webinar “Successful Urban Waters Cooperative Agreement Training” presented on November 13, 2014; and participate in the EPA-sponsor urban water training session hosted by River Network at River Rally 2015 in Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico on May 1 – 2, 2015.

- c. Katia Avilés, from Enlace presented an update on Urban Water Small Grants that have been used for Environmental Awareness and Education. Initiatives have included urban farming in school premises, young scientists initiative, community theater productions, developing a community newspaper and coloring book, anti-bullying/anti-violence environmental field days, among others.

IV. Work Plan initiatives and opportunities for collaboration

Ingrid Vila (UWA) proceeded to facilitate a discussion of the six (6) Work Plan Initiatives that have been identified as areas of opportunities for the next two years. The Draft Work Plan had been distributed to meeting participants prior to the meeting for their review. The Draft Work Plan which was the basis of discussion is included as Attachment 2.

Initiative 1: USACE Caño Martín Peña Ecosystem Restoration Project

- Both Lyvia Rodríguez (Enlace) and Judith Enck (EPA) indicated that the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has the intention to make the Public Notification of the availability of the Feasibility Study for public comment by July 10, 2015.
- The December 2015 deadline for Feasibility Study Approval is key for project development within proposed schedule.
- Carmen Guerrero, Secretary of the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources confirmed they are working on ensuring allocation of local funds for the Pre-Construction and Engineering (PED) Phase.

Action Items:

- ⇒ Enlace and EPA to follow up with USACE to ensure July 10 Public Notification.
- ⇒ DNER to ensure both local funding for PED phase.

Initiative 2: Reframing a broader vision for the project

- Participants were in agreement of the need to pursue a broader vision. National Park Service (NPS) and the Economic Development Agency(EDA) need to be integrated in the process.
- US Forest Service (USFS) expressed full support in this engagement.
- Carmen Guerrero (DNER) indicated they could assist in the preparation of Audiovisuals through a PR Tourism Company and DNER alliance, once the Vision is elaborated.
- Javier Laureano from the San Juan Bay Estuary Program (SJBEP) indicated they had prepared guided scripts for the Caño Martín Peña that could be updated and refreshed.

Action Item:

- ⇒ EPA will help in engaging the NPS in this process.
- ⇒ A follow up meeting is to be coordinated with the Municipality of San Juan (MSJ) to delineate a plan to pursue EDA support.
- ⇒ Once NPS and EDA have been engaged, need to coordinate a meeting with NPS, EDA and USFS.

Initiative 3: Infrastructure projects

- Kasey Jacobs from the Caribbean Landscape Conservation Cooperative (CLCC) raised the issue of ensuring that the Israel Bitumul North Stormwater system being designed by the MSJ includes climate change futures.
- The main issue that is impeding the commencement of some of the infrastructure projects (Israel Bitumul North, Relocation of Rexach Siphon) is the identification of funds for housing relocations that need to occur prior to project start.

Action Items:

- ⇒ A follow up meeting is to be coordinated between the MSJ, the CLCC and Office of the Commissioner of Municipal Affairs (OCAM in Spanish), who is leading the effort for the National Disaster Resiliency Competition with Housing and Urban Development.
- ⇒ A follow up meeting between Enlace and the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority is needed to clear some issues in Siphon Rexach Relocation, Israel Bitumul South.

Initiative 4: Housing

- Participants agreed in constituting a Housing Subcommittee to define a Comprehensive housing acquisition, relocation, construction action program.
- Magaly Méndez from HUD suggested that the Municipality of San Juan request feedback from the Promised Zone proposal presented in 2014, in order to present a stronger proposal in 2015. Next round will probably open by the end of the year.

- Participants also agreed on the need to identify a short term revitalization project in the Caño.

Action Items:

- ⇒ Coordinate a first meeting of the Housing Subcommittee.
- ⇒ MSJ and Enlace to coordinate Promise Zone feedback and preparation of 2015 proposal.
- ⇒ Coordinate a first meeting with EPA, PR Housing Dept., MSJ, SJBE and Enlace to start defining project opportunities.

Initiative 5: Sustainable socio-economic development

- María de los Angeles de Jesús from the Small Business Administration (SBA) reiterated their interest in offering support. SBA already sent Enlace the Strategic Alliance Memorandum in order to proceed with services.
- Urban farming has great potential in Caño communities, but requires additional support. Carmen Guerrero (DNER) suggested contacting Edwin Almodovar from National Resource Conservation Service (USDA). EPA's "Local Foods, Local Places" program could be a great opportunity.
- Renewable energy projects offer a great opportunity for developing resilience in Caño communities. Judith Enck (EPA) mentioned the importance of incorporating solar water heaters to future housing projects. Efrain O'Neill, Electrical Engineering Professor at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez informed they had just been awarded a grant to study microgrids and that Caño communities could be a good scenario to develop this effort. Judith Enck informed of the Renew Energy Vision being developed by New York State to promote clean distributed generation. Judith Enck offered to put Efrain O'Neill in contact with the people leading this effort in New York.
- Regarding climate change, Félix Aponte from DNER informed that by December of 2015, the Climate Change Council should have completed Climate Change Adaptation Plans and that the Caño Martín Peña communities should take advantage of the information to be incorporated in such plans.
- Carmen Guerrero (DNER) also informed that the Caribbean Climate Change Conference would be celebrated in Puerto Rico Nov. 17-18 and that the Caño Martín Peña should be incorporated.
- Kasey Jacobs (CLCC) raised the issue of storm surge modelling and what USFS is doing through the ULTRA program and others. Alejandra Castrodad from OCAM, informed that they are already working with the University of Wisconsin and EPA informed of the model data research.

Action Items:

- ⇒ Enlace to evaluate Memorandum and respond to SBA.

- ⇒ Enlace is to evaluate with EPA possibility of presenting a proposal for the “Local foods local places” program. Deadline for application is Sept. 15, 2015.
- ⇒ DNER and SJBE to help in contacting Edwin Almodovar from NRCS.
- ⇒ Coordinate a call between Efrain O’Neill and Renew Energy Vision leadership.
- ⇒ Coordinate a meeting between Efrain O’Neill and Enlace to better discuss possibility of developing NSF microgrid grant in Caño communities.
- ⇒ DNER to ensure incorporation of Caño Martín Peña into Climate Change Conference and sharing of Climate Change Adaptation Plans once released in December 2015.
- ⇒ EPA is to help engage US Department of Justice (USDOJ) for assistance/opportunities for engagement in youth/women programs.

Initiative 6: Expand support

- Javier Laureano briefly explained the National Estuaries Program Annual Meeting which will be celebrated in Puerto Rico Dec. 2-4th. The Caño Martín Peña will be included in the agenda. In-kind support from entities is welcome.
- Regarding the need for a proposal writer, Evelyn Huertas from EPA indicated that funds had been identified through Urban Waters to partially fund a proposal writer through the SJBEP. Javier Laureano explained that the idea is contract a proposal writer by Oct. 1, 2015 who will be dedicating 20hrs/week to the Caño Martín Peña.
- Lyvia Rodríguez (Enlace) requested that all federal agencies raise awareness about the Caño Martín Peña at the Regional federal level. Judith Enck supported the idea and encouraged federal agencies to reach out and coordinate visits from federal Secretaries and regional leadership.

Action Items:

- ⇒ All federal agencies should delineate a strategy to raise awareness about the Caño Martín Peña at the regional/central federal level.

Other opportunities identified:

- A request was made by Ariel Lugo from USFS to include the initiative on developing scholarly investigation/work within Initiative 6. He explained there is great opportunity to develop social-ecological research in the Caño that will help define what the city of the future is to look like. EPA is already conducting Research and Development in the Caño with EPA scientists from Rhode Island and USFS through CLCC, Ultra is also engaged in research.

- Judith Enck(EPA) embraced the idea and suggested a more iterative process of research where fact sheets on research progress are shared with more frequency. Kasey Jacobs (CLCC) indicated that they are precisely developing a new research approach that allows for a more iterative research process.

Action Items:

- ⇒ Work with USFS, CLCC and EPA to define iterative approach, have a comprehensive picture of current research and define possible future innovative research opportunities.

Ingrid Vila(UWA) indicated that the Draft Work Plan would be updated to reflect the meeting's discussion.

Action Items:

- ⇒ Update and finalize Urban Water Partnership Work Plan.

V. Local partnership/commitments and newsletter

Ingrid Vila (UWA) shared with the group the initiative being develop at Urban Waters to sign a local partnership commitments that reiterates agency participation and engagement. She informed that she expects the document should be ready to share in the next partnership meeting. Ingrid Vila (UWA) also informed that they are going to be working on developing a quarterly newsletter in order to keep all partners informed of progress and news relating to the Caño Martín Peña.

VI. Next meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled for September 2015.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS AND LEAD AGENCY

Num.	Work Plan Initiative	Action Item	Lead agency/entity
1	Initiative 1	Enlace and EPA to follow up with USACE to ensure July 10, 2015 Public Notification.	Enlace/EPA
2	Initiative 1	DNER to ensure both local funding for PED phase.	DNER
3	Initiative 2	EPA will help in engaging the NPS for Vision Planning process. (Rivers, Trails and	EPA

Num.	Work Plan Initiative	Action Item	Lead agency/entity
		Conservation)	
4	Initiative 2	A follow up meeting is to be coordinated with the Municipality of San Juan(MSJ) to delineate a plan to pursue EDA support in Vision Planning.	UWA/MSJ
5	Initiative 2	Once NPS and EDA have been engaged, need to coordinate a meeting with NPS, EDA and USFS.	UWA
6	Initiative 3	A follow up meeting is to be coordinated, to discuss climate change futures in stormwater design, between the MSJ, the CLCC and Office of the Commissioner of Municipal Affairs (OCAM in Spanish), who is leading the effort for the National Disaster Resiliency Competition with Housing and Urban Development.	UWA
7	Initiative 3	A follow up meeting between Enlace and the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority is needed to clear some issues in Siphon Rexach Relocation, Israel Bitumul South projects.	UWA
8	Initiative 4	Coordinate a first meeting of the Housing Subcommittee.	UWA
9	Initiative 4	MSJ and Enlace to coordinate Promise Zone feedback and preparation of 2015 proposal.	MSJ/Enlace
10	Initiative 4	Coordinate a first meeting with EPA, PR Housing Dept., MSJ, SJBE and Enlace to start defining project opportunities.	UWA/Enlace
11	Initiative 5	Enlace to evaluate Strategic Alliance Memorandum and respond to SBA.	Enlace
12	Initiative 5	Enlace is to evaluate with EPA possibility of	Enlace/EPA

Num.	Work Plan Initiative	Action Item	Lead agency/entity
		presenting a proposal for the “Local foods local places” program. Deadline for application is Sept. 15, 2015.	
13	Initiative 5	DNER and SJBE to help in contacting Edwin Almodovar from NRCS/USDA. This is to identify additional support for urban farming.	DNER/SJBE
14	Initiative 5	Coordinate a call between Efrain O’Neill (UPR-Mayaguez) and Renew Energy Vision/NY State leadership.	EPA
15	Initiative 5	Coordinate a meeting between Efrain O’Neill (UPR-Mayaguez) and Enlace to better discuss possibility of developing NSF microgrid grant in Caño communities.	UWA
16	Initiative 5	DNER to ensure incorporation of Caño Martín Peña into Climate Change Conference (Nov. 17-18) and sharing of Climate Change Adaptation Plans once released in December 2015.	DNER
17	Initiative 5	EPA is to help engage US Department of Justice (USDOJ) for assistance/opportunities for engagement in youth/women programs.	EPA
18	Initiative 6	All federal agencies should delineate a strategy to raise awareness about the Caño Martín Peña at the regional/central federal level	All
19	Initiative 6	Work with USFS, CLCC and EPA to define iterative approach, have a comprehensive picture of current research and define possible future innovative research opportunities.	UWA
20	General	Update and finalize Urban Water Partnership Work Plan.	UWA

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Attachment 1 – Sign-in sheet

URBAN WATER PARTNERSHIP MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET			
UW Location:	Caño Martín Peña, San Juan, PR	Meeting Date:	July 2, 2015
Meeting time:	9:00am-11:00am	Place/Room:	Rainforest Room , EPA Offices, Guaynabo , PR

Name	Agency/Entity	Phone	E-Mail
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Kasey Jacobs	CLCC - Forest Service	576 376 - 8791	kaseyrjacobs@caribbeancc.org

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Name	Agency/Entity	Phone	E-Mail
Magaly Figueroa	CLCC/USFS	by phone	
Edrahn D'neal	UPR Mayaguez	by phone	
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**Attachment 2 – Caño Martín Peña Urban Water Draft Work Plan
(included as a separate document)**