**SAVE Meeting Minutes reviewed July 14**

Sunday, February 12, 2015, 1:30pm Pacific / 4:30pm Eastern

Location: Fiona's place, 5357 Bryant Ave, Oakland

Attending: Derek (conductor, scribe), Fiona (forager), Kushal, Tami, Yekang;

by phone: Marcia, Randy.

**1. approve meeting minutes from February 25**

All were in favor of approving the minutes.

**2. Taiwan update**

**a. Marcia & Randy's trip in April**

After the trip Marcia sent some updates to the LA205 students and Tami posted them to SAVE’s Facebook (see May 31, 2015 posting).

The trip included teaching at CYCU (including lecturing to a class of mostly mainland-Chinese students, who were totally new to issues involving the Black-faced Spoonbill or any kind of activism), as well as time down south in Tainan, the National Scenic Area, Jiading, and Haomeiliao (near Budai). See below for more on specific issues.

**b. National Scenic Area: controversial airstrip, other proposals**

Earlier in the year, Po-Hsiu and members of the Taiwan Black-faced Spoonbill Conservation Association (BFSA) in Ding Shan village found out about this proposed airstrip that would be located in the National Scenic Area near BFS habitat and a core roosting area, and mentioned it to Marcia who sent word to John Liu and Fu-chang. It was discussed at our meeting in February, after which SAVE (Derek) and Randy wrote letters opposing the "love theme park" proposal for the National Scenic Area (NSA) and the airstrip. Both of these letters were responded to in a single letter from J. Y. Chen, Minister of the Ministry of Transportation and Communication (MOTC).

Soon after Marcia and Randy arrived in Taiwan, they met with John and Fu-chang to discuss strategy in a coffeeshop near Taoyuan high-speed rail station. The director of the NSA, who was trying to meet with Marcia and Randy, tried to evade responsibility by claiming that he is in the business of increasing tourism, not that of protecting birds. Marcia and Randy said that unless the National Scenic Area removed its support of the airstrip, there was no reason to meet.

Fu-chang quickly set up a meeting for Randy and Marcia with Legislator Tien (one of Taiwan's "at-large" legislators and a known environmentalist) to discuss the airstrip. At the meeting, Tien called her fellow legislator Chiau, Wen-Yan (who coincidentally had convened the meeting months earlier about the flawed proposal for Road 1-4 at Jiading) and they agreed from past experience that Director Cheng was a "bad guy". Tentatively they agreed to hold a press conference about this issue, but it ended up not happening after the National Scenic Area finally relented and wrote a letter against the airstrip.

Marcia and Randy also met with Hang, Wei-Chuan (Director) and Huang, Kuang-Ying Lafei (scientist) at the Taijiang National Park office one night to discuss the airstrip. Huang talked about the on-going tracking of radio-collared spoonbills, and noted that there are data on spoonbill flight patterns, which air traffic from the airstrip would collide with. He also indicated that the Civil Aeronautics Administration had contacted him about the issue.

They visited the airstrip site with members of BFSA (Tai, Tzu-Yao, Secretary General, and Tseng, Hui-Chu, Secretary), Po-Hsiu, and Chun-Yao Yang, and saw that 500 meters of the total 800m length had already been built -- graded and edged in rock.

SAVE has continued to send letters (signed by Derek as the SAVE President) opposing the airstrip to various government officials (Ministry of Transportation, Executive Yuan, Civil Aeronautics Administration); Randy has also sent letters of opposition separate from SAVE. The responses from the officials have been noncommittal. The hearing by the Civil Aeronautics Administration has been postponed, however, pending new requirements for review of the airstrip proposal by the Council of Agriculture (in charge of endangered species) and the Construction and Planning Agency (in charge of the National Wetlands Act).

The National Wetlands Act has been in effect for five months, and already plans for the 44 Wetlands of National Importance are being drafted. A team of consultants led by Terrence Lee (Ministry of Construction) is preparing the plans. Hsiao-Wen and her team are providing background information on hydrology for two sites (Haomeiliao is Pin-Han’s dissertation site). It would be useful for SAVE to get the drafts of these plans before they are finalized (at the end of 2015, Marcia thinks). Randy said he had confidence in the Wetland Act's requirements and in Terence's commitment to conservation; Randy suggested that SAVE should offer to help. "Bad" director Cheng, however, is fear-mongering over these plans, telling people that the plans will prevent people from using their land.

Marcia and Randy, along with Hsiao-Wen and her students, ran a three-day workshop at the village of Haomeiliao, after the workshop at Jiading (see below). This small village is across the river from Budai, a few kilometers from Shin-Tsen. It is a center for oyster-shucking, within the overall Taiwanese oyster industry. Most of the residents are poor and old, with just a few wealthy and influential residents, and the village seems to be in severe decline; the elementary school has under 50 students. The coast is eroding severely, probably because the water flowing from the rivers is sediment-starved from upstream dams. A local lighthouse tilted and collapsed after the earth at its base eroded. People have planted ironwood trees to stabilize the coast. Randy predicts that the dikes will fail soon and the village will be flooded, as one of the first areas of the returned Inland Sea. Mr. Tsai, of the restored salt pan nearby, attended the final presentation is more hopeful for the village and the area in general.

Marcia also reported on a new proposal to build several desalination plants along Taiwan's west coast, to provide a reliable source of drinking water even in periods of drought like the one Taiwan is experiencing. One may be proposed at the fan-shaped ponds at Chiku, in the NSA. The design firm AECOM is preparing the study on the desalination plants. Tami and Derek may know of studies or articles about the environmental impacts of desalination plants in the U.S.

Action item (Derek): Draft a follow-up letter, on behalf of SAVE, to Lee, Tao-Sheng (Forestry Bureau) and Terrence Lee (Construction and Planning Agency) condemning the airstrip, in light of the forthcoming plans for Wetlands of National Importance. Circulate to SAVE-Exec for comment.

Action item (Marcia): Ask Pin-Han or Hsiao-Wen to get the drafts of the plans for some or all of the 44 Nationally Important Wetlands.

Action item (Randy): Tell Terrence Lee that SAVE is willing to help review or advise on the plans for the Nationally Important Wetlands that relate to the spoonbill.

Action item (Marcia with Tami & Derek): Find out more about the proposed desalination plant(s), especially at Chiku. Derek and Tami write two sentences summarizing the issues they know about and send them to Marcia, who will send them with a message to Tai, Tzu-Yao, asking whether it is still an issue that needs more research.

**c. Jiading**

The proposed Road 1-4 has not yet been built. Terrence Lee told Marcia and Randy that next year his department would be nominating Jiading for a higher classification as a Wetland of National Importance (not just Local Importance), which would help prevent the road from being built. We also hear that the central government will not provide money to Kaohsiung County to build this road, but we don't know whether the County officials will try to get it built with local money alone.

At the request of Jiading Wetlands Youth, Randy and Marcia held an activism workshop in Jiading, also attended by Professor (and SAVE Advisory Committee member) Masato Dohi and his students, and Professor Jen Shie (National Pingtung University) and her students. Some of them stayed with local families, some stayed in a new B&B. Members of the local Jiading Youth Wetland Association led the workshop, kicking it off with a PowerPoint introduction of themselves and offering their inspiring plans to return to Jiading and help their community. All of the students participated in mapping and interviewing the day before and presented their ideas for an ecotourism map for Jiading.

The workshop was a huge success. Professor Ueng, photographer Mr. Happy, Kun-Hai Lin, and Ho-Tai Zheng attended, as did community members and activists.

The Jiading Wetland itself was almost totally dry and walkable in April, so Jiading Wetlands Youth led the local people in a "cleanup" day.

Tadao Fujiwara and others from the newly formed "Team SPOON" brought some of their jewelry to share, including rings and earrings, inspired by the colored tracking-bands on spoonbills' legs.

Action item (Marcia): Follow up with Terrence Lee about the Jiading "National Importance" designation, in case SAVE can help at all.

**d. LA205 research and final files**

Tami has all of the students' files -- the final presentations and the earlier research, including GIS data. She would like to sort through the files, not just post everything to SAVE's Box site.

Action item (Tami, Kushal): Go through the LA205 files and post the relevant files on the Box site for future reference.

**3. Korea update**

Yekang reassured us that she had not heard of any new threats to spoonbills in Korea.

She had read research papers and some theses by Korean master's-students about spoonbills, including studies of changes in the BFS nesting population at the artificial island in Nakdong Reservoir, near Songdo.

Randy noticed that two of the students were from Seoul National University; their advisers were not bird scientists, but a landscape architect and a forester

Action item (Yekang): Make contact with the authors of the theses: introduce SAVE, and ask the authors where they are and what they are working on now.

**4. research for a new publication on BFS geometries, and “reconnecting with contacts”**

As they reported in February, Pedro and Tami found and categorized (by location) dozens of articles that they found about spoonbills or wetlands. At that meeting, we signed up to review blocks of articles: Korea (Randy and Yekang), China (Derek and Jing), Taiwan (Tami and Marcia), Japan (Fiona and Kinya), and “other” (Shanna). These articles are in folders in SAVE’s Box.

Yekang sent a good summary of the Korea articles to Randy and Marcia including the abstracts and figures/tables. The other groups could do similar things to their own batches of articles.

Action item (Yekang): Send the summary of Korea articles to other SAVE members working on articles.

Action item (Fiona): Reach out to Masato for more information on research from Japan. Possibly enlist Kushal.

Action item (Marcia and Tami): Reach out to Po-Hsiu for help on the research from Taiwan.

Action item (Randy, Yekang, Derek, Jing, Tami, Marcia, Fiona, Kinya, Shanna): Read the assigned articles. Prepare a summary like Yekang did of readings. Plan to discuss an overall plan of attack at our meeting in November, when Marcia and Randy will be in Berkeley.

**5. nominations for SAVE Executive Committee**

Marcia suggested inviting one member each from Team SPOON (in Japan) and the Jiading Wetlands Youth to join the Executive Committee. Each group should decide internally on a member to participate.

Action item (Marcia): Write to Team SPOON and the Jiading Wetlands Youth, inviting each to provide one member to join our Executive Committee. Include the existing sheet of expectations/responsibilities.

**6. annual newsletter and membership drive / member-appeal letter**

It is time to produce the newsletter for 2015. Drafts of articles will be due to Fiona (newsletter editor) in on month, by August 12. Articles should be brief: five sentences or so and include photos or graphics as appropriate. These are the topics that we agreed to. Members not present can suggest additional articles.

* Fiona: (editor)
* Derek: airstrip and NSA proposals
* Randy: bad end of the planning at Fukuoka
* (Darryl: a cartoon to accompany the article on Fukuoka?)
* Marcia: workshop in Haomeiliao, and plans for Wetlands of National Importance; membership letter
* Kushal: LA205 studio
* Tami: new research
* Yekang: new research from Korea
* someone from Team SPOON: report on Team SPOON
* Po-Hsiu and Zhi-Yu (Jiading Wetlands Youth): Jiading activism-training workshop

Action item (all listed above): Draft your 5-sentence article by August 12. Email to Fiona.

**7. Earth Island updates**

**a. Directors' Summit, May 15-17**

Derek attended the biennial Directors' Summit. It included a session on Friday evening at the Brower Center in downtown Berkeley, and an overnight weekend session at the Marin Headlands. Earth Island staff and the leaders of roughly 40 projects attended. The summit included segments for small-group discussions, whole-group larger discussions, sessions for focused topics (Derek attended the two sessions dealing with attracting donors and fundraising), and a talent show / open-mike evening on Saturday. SAVE, as an all-volunteer group with a tiny budget, seems to be an anomaly among the projects. Derek said that attending the summit was useful to maintain our contacts with the Earth Island staff and make new contacts among the other contacts.

Marcia suggested that "war stories" could be a good topic for the 2017 summit. She noted that many of the campaigns and requests for endorsement, as distributed on the Earth Island Directors' email list, have been worded strongly or aggressively like some of SAVE's letters.

**b. annual budget**

Marcia submitted SAVE's budget for the new fiscal year, July 2015 to June 2016. The budget included money to travel to China for the next Democratic Design conference, which we expected to be in March 2016, but it will actually be in December 2016 -- see below. We will adjust our income and expenses to match what SAVE actually does in the next year.

**8. Democratic Design conference 2016**

The conference is scheduled for December 15-17, 2016, in Hong Kong. This will be in SAVE's next budget cycle (FY2016-2017) but will require considerable discussion and planning as to how SAVE will contribute to travel costs. Marcia suggested getting a coalition of activists throughout the flyway (Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, etc.) to work in a variety of locations before the conference and then share their work at the conference.

**9. next meeting**

Sunday, August 16, at 1:30pm Pacific. Fiona’s new house is the tentative location.