



project clean water

Science and Technology TAC Basin Planning Issues Technical Workgroup

Meeting Summary
March 11, 2003

The Basin Planning Issues Technical Workgroup met on March 11, 2003 to discuss the submittal of issues to be considered for inclusion on the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board's Triennial Review Basin Plan Issues List (Issues List). Sheri McPherson, County of San Diego, opened the meeting by providing overviews of the Regional Board's Basin Plan Workshop held on March 3, the last meeting of this Workgroup on March 4, and the timeline for public participation in the Triennial Review process.

Answers to Questions from the March 4 Meeting

A number of questions from the Workgroup's March 4th meeting have since been answered based on correspondence with Regional Board staff:

- Detailed summaries of all issues included on the draft Issues List will be posted on the Regional Board's website by the morning of March 12, 2003.
- The draft Issues List consists of the 1998 Issues List plus several new issues.
- Public comments regarding ranking criteria and the grouping of overlapping issues may be submitted at any time during this process; the March 14, 2003 deadline applies only to the addition of new issues to be considered for inclusion on the Issues List.
- Issues classified as "administrative changes", which range from correcting typographical errors to clarifying vague language in the Basin Plan, will be dealt with in the same manner as other Basin Plan amendments would be. It is still unclear whether this would include a formal public hearing, comment period, etc.

Discussion of Basin Plan Issue Submittals

The group discussed two issues that have been prepared for submission on behalf of this Workgroup.

TDS Management Plan: The Workgroup will recommend that the development of a region-wide TDS management plan be included on the Issues List. The purpose of the TDS management plan would be to better align TDS water quality objectives with other regional factors, including: current TDS levels in imported water, increasing reliance on reclaimed water, existing agricultural irrigation practices, climatic variability over time, and the need to stratify management strategies to recognize differences between water inside and outside of the San Diego County Water Authority's service area.

This comment will also address the need to ensure the participation of the public and stakeholders in the development of the management plan. It was agreed that the Comment Submittal Form should be altered to stress that this is an issue of regional importance, and should not be limited to those waters listed as impaired by TDS. Recommendations were also made to add the County of Orange, Building Industry Association, and water reclamation dischargers to the list of affected parties on the Comment Submittal Form.

Nutrient Water Quality Objectives: The Workgroup will recommend that the development of water quality objectives for nutrients in surface water be included on the Issues List. The proposal would be to develop separate, stratified nutrient criteria ranges for: 1) flowing waters, 2) lakes and reservoirs, 3) estuaries, and 4) wetlands using local data sources. In addition to total nitrogen and phosphorous fractions, dissolved (bioavailable) forms of phosphorous would also be considered for criteria development. This comment will also address the need to ensure the participation of the public and stakeholders in the development of nutrient objectives.

County of Orange Comments: The County of Orange is considering submittal of the following comments: 1) Developing a policy to prevent the addition of additional beneficial uses for wetlands that have been developed for the express purpose of water quality treatment, 2) Looking at how Porter-Cologne Section 13241 factors were applied when the Basin Plan was written, 3) Incorporating a seasonality component (dry weather vs. wet weather) for various water quality objectives, 4) Addressing the issue of whether Porter-Cologne Section 13241 factors were considered when non-stormwater discharges were prohibited in municipal stormwater permits, and 5) Developing standards or guidelines for the evaluation of the data used to develop / review water quality objectives (e.g. peer review). Discussion about data assessment resulted in general agreement for the need to track the progress of ongoing state efforts to develop 303(d) listing/de-listing criteria, since these criteria may have applicability beyond the 303(d) process. There was a suggestion to develop a Workgroup comment regarding development of a policy that would require appropriate data evaluation (potentially using the state model as an example). The County of Orange indicated that if sufficient time is found before the March 14th deadline, it would develop this comment for submittal by the Workgroup.

Port of San Diego Comment: The Port of San Diego will be recommending for inclusion on the Issues List that the Regional Board improve its GIS capability, particularly with regard to defining watersheds, hydrologic units, and the portion of waterbodies that are listed as impaired.

Stakeholder List for Workgroup Comments

Meeting attendees indicated whether they would, or would not, like to be included as stakeholders on the Comment Submittal Forms.

Potential Ranking Criteria for Basin Plan Issues List

Though comments on the ranking criteria that will be used by the Regional Board to prioritize its Issues List are not due on March 14, meeting attendees discussed potential comments to modify the Regional Board's draft ranking criteria. There was general agreement that the three criteria addressing water quality should be consolidated into one. Also, the Workgroup agreed that four additional factors should be included as potential ranking criteria: 1) All Porter-Cologne Section 13241 Factors, 2) Stakeholder Resources and Partnerships, 3) Protection of Existing Water Quality, and 4) Issues of Regional Significance.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Basin Planning Workgroup will be held on April 15, 2003 (1 – 3 p.m.) at the City of San Diego's Metro Biosolids Facility. At this meeting stakeholders will discuss the Issues List in further detail. An effort will also be made to group overlapping issues into broader issue categories.

Attendees List

Sheri McPherson (Chair) – County of San Diego
Paul Gebert – San Diego County Water Authority
Karen Helyer – Port of San Diego
Eric Klein – County of San Diego
Rosanna Lacarra – MEC Analytical
Jeff Pasek – City of San Diego, Water Department
Todd Snyder - County of San Diego
Amanda Carr – County of Orange
Art Barnett – MEC Analytical
Paul Davy – County of San Diego
David Keith – Ancier Environmental
Jason Mooney – City of El Cajon
Li-Ming He – County of San Diego
JoAnn Weber – County of San Diego
Alan Thume – San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy
Cynthia Mallett – Mission Resource Conservation District
Jerry Livingston – Building Industry Association
Rob Chichester – U.S. Navy, Southwest Environmental Code