

**FINAL
Meeting Summary**

**Santa Margarita River
Watershed Nutrient Initiative Group Meeting
Thursday January 10, 2013
12:30 am – 3:30 pm**

Location:

Rancho California Water District
2nd Floor Conference Room
42135 Winchester Road
Temecula, CA 92589-9017

Attendee List:

Name	Organization	E-mail
Jason Uhley	Riverside County Flood Control & Water Conservation District	juhley@rcflood.org
Rich Williamson	Rancho California Water District (RCWD)	williamsonr@ranchowater.com
Denise Landstedt	RCWD	landstedtd@ranchowater.com
Jo Ann Weber	County of San Diego	joann.weber@sdcounty.ca.gov
Sheri McPherson	County of San Diego	sheri.mcpherson@sdcounty.ca.gov
Chuck Katz	US Navy (SPAWAR)	chuck.katz@navy.mil
Mark Bonsavage	USMC Camp Pendleton	mark.bonsavage.usmc.mil
Kyle Cook	USMC Camp Pendleton	kyle.r.cook@usmc.mil
Khalique Khan	USMC Camp Pendleton	khalique.khan@usmc.mil
Martha Sutula	SCCWRP	marthas@sccwrp.org
Tommy Wells	AMEC Environment & Infrastructure, Inc.	tommy.wells@amec.com
Ashli Desai	Larry Walker & Associates	ashlid@lwa.com
Dave Ceppos	Center for Collaborative Policy, California State University Sacramento	dceppos@ccp.csus.edu
Barry Pulver	Regional Water Quality Control Board	bpulver@waterboards.ca.gov
Matt Landon	USGS	landon@usgs.gov
Wes Danskin	USGS	wdanskin@usgs.gov
Jayne Joy	EMWD	joyj@emwd.org
Karla Standridge	Mission RCD	karla@missionrcd.org
Clint Boschen	Tetra Tech	clint.boschen@tetrattech.com
Alison Witheridge	Tetra Tech	alison.witheridge@tetrattech.com
Scott Thomas	Stetson Engineers	scott@stetsonengineers.com
Via Telephone:		
Roxy Carter	Cal Trout	rcarter@caltrout.org
Pam Nelson	Sierra Club/EMARCD	pamela05n@yahoo.com
Roya Yazdanifard	Caltrans	roya.yazadifard@dot.ca.gov

Meeting Materials:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Draft Project Process Plan dated January 4, 2013
3. Table of Project Process Plan Comments

Meeting Goals:

1. Discuss and get shared understanding about the revised Project Process Plan.
2. Receive informational updates.
3. Track status of action items.

Action Items:

1. All Participants will review the November 28, 2012 meeting summary and have any comments to Dave Ceppos by February 13, 2013.
2. Dave to send a reminder out that we are going to have a conversation and presentation on SMR fisheries at the February 20 meeting to get an idea of the footprint and uses of tributaries by various fish species.
3. All Participants will send key questions to Dave re: fisheries in the SMR in advance of February meeting by January 25 at 10 am.
4. Sheri McPherson will send Denise Landstedt a copy of signed grant agreement to use as a template.
5. All Participants will provide any comments on the QAPP to Martha Sutula by January 16, 2013.
6. Barry Pulver will check and see if he can release draft section of the Regional Boards "*Practical Vision*" document; particularly the *Healthy Watersheds and Innovative Restoration* sections.
7. Jason Uhley and Barry will meet off line prior to Barry meeting with the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Executive Officer (EO) on January 18, 2013 to go over questions and what a response is needed from the EO on.
8. Barry will send out a letter with the results of his meeting with the RWQCB EO on the 18th to the SMR Group addressed to Jason prior to the next meeting.
9. Martha and Ashli Desai will make corrections to tables in the Project Process Plan.
10. Mark Bonsavage will contact Martha by the January 17, 2013 re; Camp Pendleton comments on the Process Plan and next steps about the Estuary .
11. Martha will coordinate a meeting for the week of the January 28, 2013 to go over the Estuary modeling efforts and the potential impacts on upper watershed sampling this

water year. This meeting will include Martha, SPAWAR representatives (Chuck and PF), Barry Pulver, and Clint Boschen.

12. All Participants will have comments on the Project Process Plan to Martha, Dave, and Ashli by 5:00 pm January 28, 2013.

SMR Group Decisions

There were no decisions during the January 10, 2013 SMR Nutrient Initiative Group Meeting

Introduction

Dave Ceppos (Facilitator, Center for Collaborative Policy) reviewed the meeting goals and agenda, and inquired whether anyone had changes. No changes or comments were noted.

Review of November 28, 2012 Action Items

In the interest of saving time, it was agreed that only action items that had not been completed would be reviewed.

- Action Item 4: The Regulatory Subgroup meeting has purposefully not been pursued yet. It has been determined that it is not yet appropriate – **This item has been placed on hold until an appropriate time to convene the Subgroup.**
- Action Item 10: Brittany Struck (NMFS) and Roxy Carter (Caltrot) will provide a presentation on the life cycle and associated geographic and hydrologic conditions for SMR steelhead at the next SMR meeting in February. Dave will work with Brittany and Roxy to prepare the presentation. – **This item is ongoing.**
- Action Item 11: The Steering Committee needs to consider what level of detail and information they want included in cost estimates for the Special Studies. This will be revisited at the January 2013 meeting. – **This item has been placed on hold for the near future.**
- All other action items listed in the November 28, 2012 meeting summary have been completed.

Review and Approval of the November 28, 2012 Meeting Summary

Denise had comments which were recorded by Dave during the meeting. Of note:

- The planning grant reference is out of place in the text of the summary, it should be moved to the end of the General Updates section.
- The Grant will be due in March 2013.

Jo Ann requested more time to review the summary. It was agreed that the November 28, 2012 meeting summary would be held till the next meeting to allow more time for review.

Action Items:

All participants will review the November 28, 2012 meeting summary and provide comments to Dave prior to the February 20, 2013 meeting.

General Updates:

Mark Bonsavage introduced Kyle Cook who will become the lead attendee representing USMC Camp Pendleton at future meetings. Camp Pendleton has completed a Salt Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) for the southern part of the base and is currently working on one for northern part of base.

RCWD received confirmation of award on December 4th that they will receive funding for their IRWM plan update. Part of that update will be development of a SNMP. RCWD has issued a contract for preparation of their SNMP. Please email Rich or Denise if you would like to be notified of progress on the SNMP and meetings. The Tri-County Funding Area has agreed to transfer funding for SMR phase 2 effort to the San Diego region so the entire proposal will be submitted through the San Diego region. RCWD requested a copy of the San Diego agreement to use as a template for their effort. RCWD performed a cleanup event during Aqua conference a couple weeks ago. They were able to remove two to three truck loads of trash from Murrieta Creek. RCWD also discussed a recent Supreme Court ruling which provides further interpretation of the CWA. NRDC sued LA County for violation of their MS4 permit. The ruling and opinion is available here:

http://www2.bloomberglaw.com/public/document/Los_Angeles_County_Flood_Control_District_v_Natural_Resources_Def

The SD IRWM grant application has been approved including this project and will be presented in March 2013. The funding was decreased from \$1.5 million to \$985k because there is a smaller pot of money this round.

With the \$985k from San Diego and \$185k from RCWD there will be approximately \$1.1 million. Approximately \$900k of this will be to perform the technical work.

The Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) was sent out to the group for review in December. However, SCCWRP has only received one set of comments. Camp Pendleton will provide comments by next week.

There will be a meeting the week of January 28 for SPAWAR, Martha, Barry, and the County of San Diego to get clarification on the outcome of SPAWAR's modeling effort and what else will be needed to fully characterize the estuary and anticipated costs.

Barry will meet with the RWQCB Executive Officer (EO) and other Board staff on January 18, 2013 to confirm if the RWQCB will provide support for the actions of the SMR Group and any concerns the RWQCB staff have. Barry will prepare and send a letter to the SMR Group addressed to Jason summarizing the results of that meeting. Barry will also seek permission to roll out a draft version of the RWQCB's Practical Vision; in particular draft versions of Healthy Watersheds and Innovative Restoration sections. .

Action Items

Sheri to send Denise a copy of signed grant agreement to use as a template.

All to have any comments on the QAPP to Martha by Wednesday (01.16.2013).

Barry to check and see if he can roll out drafts of the Regional Boards Practical Vision.

TAC Meeting Update

The TAC meeting focused on a presentation of the Watershed Loading Model by Tetra Tech. There was discussion on where to acquire more weather data and land use data. Sources such as MCAS Camp Pendleton were recommended for weather data. Additional land use data sources such as tax assessors data, GIS from RCWD, and Agricultural GIS data were recommended. Tetra Tech will compare current weather data with new weather data and present to the group prior to proceeding.

There will be a consultant meeting at SCCWRP on January 31st.

The format of having the TAC in the morning with an update to the stakeholder group in the afternoon was determined to be the desired format moving forward. However, the stakeholder group is to be notified in advance if any decisions that are to be made during a TAC meeting. Any decisions made during a TAC meeting will be presented during the stakeholder meeting to the group.

Project Process Plan Revision Review

Ashli Desai presented a revised version of the Project Process Plan (PPP) to the group. Ashli reviewed the major changes that had been completed.

- Table 11 of the PPP presents potential adverse effects which were taken from another document. They are not specific to the SMR, but instead represent a broad spectrum of what effects might be there. There was group consensus that this should be made clear in the PPP so that readers are not confused about the implications of general information in that table .
- Table 13 is more specific to what should be looked at in the SMR Watershed. Cyanobacteria are not recommended. The font in this table should be adjusted as it varies from cell to cell.
- Table 14 now links issues to technical work in document.
- Additional comments should be submitted to Ashli in track changes.
- “Implementation plans” will be stricken from the PPP and replaced with text about development of sustainable loads for the estuary.

Following completion of the review of the major edits in this version of the PPP, the discussion revolved around several topics. A bulleted summary of each major topic and the key points discussed follows.

Nutrient Numeric Endpoints (NNE)

- There are two types of algae. The kind that coat the substrate and the kind that are suspended in the water. The type that are suspended in the water column are being referred to as plankton for this project. The plankton do not regularly dominate the algal biomass. However, there may be certain times when they do:
 - The standing pools in Murrieta Creek during drying conditions.
 - The estuary during certain conditions.
- An NNE is similar to a biological objective. It provides a site specific number.
- An NNE forces you to develop a model, so if you have to develop a TMDL, you already have a model.
- An NNE is a site specific instantaneous numeric target, a TMDL is a total daily target.
- If an NNE is exceeded, it would potentially be addressed with a TMDL.
- An NNE will vary by season and flow regime.

- The spread sheet model previously used to define river conditions was just a screening tool that the work has moved beyond. It will no longer be used. It will be retained in an appendix as historical information.

River and Estuary Conditions and Regulatory Timing

- The estuary TMDL will likely precede a potential river TMDL. How do we structure the estuary TMDL to help the river TMDL?
- The river has very different conditions than the estuary (e.g. vegetation, water chemistry, substrate, flow, etc).
- The TAC will continue to monitor and advise the SMR Participants about what is happening / proposed to be addressed upstream, and what is happening / proposed to be addressed in the estuary.
- The downstream water body trumps the upstream, therefore if you have to meet a downstream water quality standard or target, upstream conditions must comply.
- There is not a clearly defined break point between the SMR and the estuary. Additionally, the upper part of the estuary likely behaves more like a river. This behavior is likely seasonal and is based on the mouth of the estuary being open or closed as well seasonal flows from the upper watershed.

303(d) / TMDL

- The Santa Margarita River is on the 303(d) list. If an NNE approach is deemed in feasible or unwarranted, the default approach will be TMDL development.
- There was group consensus that the science should determine the way forward and that the work proposed by the SMR Group is consistent with the TMDL decision-making flow chart. There are not unique activities proposed that are different from these standard steps that would be conducted on any potentially impaired water body as a means to determine what should be done next.
- It is possible to delist the SMR if the science points that way. The more water quality and water resource information that is produced that is of high quality and defensibility, the more it will make potential delisting feasible if such a step is deemed appropriate.
- The SMR Chairperson has met with the RWQCB EO and believes that the EO supports the type of innovative approaches (e.g. NNE) that the SMR Group is considering.
- The group realizes that the type of data collected and conclusions to be made is a gamble and that nutrient impacts in the SMR could be higher or lower than expected. It is important to hear from the RWQCB that they believe and support that right thing is being done for the right reasons.
- The County of San Diego is participating with the RWQCB in a non TMDL process on Lake San Marcos.

Regional Board Meeting

- The SMR Group needs answers and ideally, commitment from the RWQCB. There is a meeting scheduled for January 18th that will hopefully produce those answers.
- Barry received permission from the SMR Group participants to give a copy of the PPP to the EO provided is says "DRAFT" on it.
- This SMR Group needs clear direction from the RWQCB as to what the Board wants.

Modelling

- The first output of the model for the group to review will likely be in March.
- The timing of everything else will depend on the model outcomes.
- The models will likely have to be run at least five times to develop site specific objectives. Implementation scenarios would likely require twice as many model runs.
- Model runs are costly and a point of hesitation for the group.

- There is concern as to if SPAWAR will be able to get their model calibrated and validated in time.
- There was group consensus that they need clear direction from the RWQCB so that they are not performing work they will have to re-perform at a later time.

Schedule

- The schedule should have a preamble that states it will change throughout time based on the results the science produces.
- The schedule should clearly define the deliverables.
- A table of reports should not go to the RWQCB at this time. It should be vetted further prior to presentation to the RWQCB.
- The schedule is separate from the PPP.
- The schedule is predicated on numerous assumptions SCCWRP has made.
- Camp Pendleton money is good for the 2013 calendar year only.
- Barring comments from Camp Pendleton, the Phase 1 schedule is good to go. The Phase 2 schedule still needs to be worked out over the next couple of months.
- The schedule should list what activities are in which phase.
- The schedule should identify if an activity is to be conducted, regardless of funding status.
- The schedule should include milestones.
- The schedule should include when RWQCB input is needed.
- Anything in italics in the schedule is a deliverable of some sort.
- The schedule should show a link to the regulatory process.
- Italics should be used for any dates not set in stone.

Action Items

Jason and Barry to meet off line prior to Barry's meeting with EO on the 18th. They will go over questions and what responses are needed from the EO.

Barry will send out a letter with the results of his internal meeting with the RWQCB EO on the 18th to the group, addressed to Jason prior to the next meeting.

Martha and Ashli to make corrections to tables in the PPP.

Mark to contact Martha by the 17th re Camp Pendleton comments.

Martha to coordinate a meeting for the week of the 28th to go over the schedule and PPP in detail.

All to have comments on the PPP to Martha, Dave, and Ashli by January 28, 2013.

Next Meeting:

TBD

February 20, 2013

Time: 9:00 am – 3:30 pm (9:00-12:00 TAC meeting, 12:30-3:30 General Stakeholder Workshop)