

**Final
Meeting Summary**

**Santa Margarita River
Watershed Nutrient Initiative Group Meeting
Thursday, July 19, 2012
9:30am – 3:00pm**

Location:

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

Attendee List:

| Name | Organization | E-mail |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Sheri McPherson | County of San Diego | sheri.mcpherson@sdcounty.ca.gov |
| Dave Ceppos | Center for Collaborative Policy, California State University Sacramento | dceppos@ccp.csus.edu |
| Michael Welch | Consultant | mwelch1@san.rr.com |
| Pam Nelson | Sierra Club / EMARCD | pamelaOSN@yahoo.com |
| Jeff Marchand | Fallbrook PUD | jeff@fpud.com |
| Martha Sutula | SCCWRP | marthas@sccwrp.org |
| Mark Bonsavage | USMC Camp Pendleton | mark.bonsavage.usmc.mil |
| Via Telephone: Jason Uhley | RCFC&WCD | juhley@rcflood.org |
| Barry Pulver | San Diego Water Board | bpulver@waterboards.ca.gov |
| Ashli Desai | Larry Walker & Associates | AshliD@LWA.com |
| Tommy Wells | AMEC Environment & Infrastructure, Inc. | tommy.wells@amec.com |
| Denise Landstedt | Rancho California Water Dist. | Landstadt1@ranchowater.com |
| Via Telephone: Mike Shelter | County of Riverside | MShetler@rceo.org |
| Via Telephone: Greg Krzys | U.S. Bureau of Reclamation | gkrzys@usbr.gov |
| Via Telephone: Con Kontaxis | Caltrans | Constantine_kontaxis@dot.ca.gov |
| Chuck Katz | U.S. Navy (SPAWAR) | chuck.katz@navy.mil |
| Via Telephone: Richard Gardner | Watershed Advocate / Director South Coast Water District | capopalm@hotmail.com |

Meeting Materials:

- Meeting Agenda.
- June 7 and June 28 Draft Meeting Summaries.
- Revised management and monitoring questions governing the workplan for the Santa Margarita River (SMR) and SMR estuary 7-16-2012 Version.
- Draft Regulators Briefing and Executive Briefing Documents.

- Memorandum dated July 10, 2012: "*Criteria for consideration of non-listed streams in the SMR Watershed NMI monitoring from Scott Thomas and Martha Sutula to SMR Watershed NMI Stakeholders*".
- Santa Margarita River Estuary Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) presentation slides handout dated July 19, 2012.

Meeting Goals:

- Receive informational updates.
- Track status of action items.
- Finalize the SMR Group letter to the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).
- Finalize the management and monitoring questions governing project work plan for SMR and SMR estuary
- Review revised technical recommendations

Action Items:

1. Jason Uhley will finalize the RWQCB letter. This revision is to reflect the points in the presentation of the Revised Management and Monitoring Questions. A revised date was not set for this action item. It was inferred this action was to be completed ASAP.
2. Jason will finalize the stakeholder invitation letter and provide to his editorial staff for a final revision before the letter is sent under Jason's signature as the Initiative Group Chairperson. The letter will identify a desired response date by Stakeholders and that Jason should be the point of contact. No revised date was set for this action item. It was inferred this action was to be completed ASAP.
3. The final Stakeholder Invitation letter will include a master list of everyone contacted. This list will be saved as an attachment to the letter and will be copied as a PDF and entered into the project record so that there is a record of who was notified. This item was noted as to be completed within a couple of days.
4. A list of current Initiative Group Participants will be put on the website. The points of contact for the Initiative Group and the SMR Nutrient Initiative process are: Chairperson Jason Uhley and staff from the County of San Diego. This item was noted as to be completed within a couple of days.
5. Martha Sutula will prepare a draft cost estimate of a sampling plan based on new management questions. This will include standard sample costs and additional tributary monitoring as optional line item costs and is to be completed on or before August 30.
6. Martha and/or Barry Pulver will contact Cindy Lin (US EPA) to encourage her participation at upcoming full Initiative Group meetings, and the meeting of the Regulatory Subgroup. No revised date was set for this action item.
7. Merge Action Item 15 into Action Item 13 in the June 28 Meeting Summary. Modify summary to reflect that these are the same action item.
8. Need to identify where the gauging stations are located in the SMR watershed to include location, type of gauge, and date range of available data. This action item was not assigned to anyone and no date was determined for completion.
9. Need to confirm what we know about the flow in the four proposed tributaries (Sandia Creek, Stone Creek, Devils Creek, and Fallbrook Creek). This action item was not assigned to anyone and no date was determined for completion.
10. Provide feedback to Dave Ceppos within one week on factual items only regarding the revision of the Revised Management and Monitoring Questions presentation. Consider the boundary of the estuary, biostimulatory objectives, and proposing of macro algae and phytoplankton monitoring. Dave will forward feedback to Martha.

11. A webinar will be held on August 14th at 1 PM to discuss the proposed presentation to the RWQCB Executive Officer (EO) and other RWQCB staff about the SMR Nutrient Initiative Group's (Group) proposed approach.
12. Martha will work with the Regulatory Subgroup to set a date to present the SMR Group approach presentation to them. The date to complete this is pending, based on the sequence of other dates related to the RWQCB EO briefing and associated letter from the SMR Group to the EO.
13. Jason will set up a presentation of the SMR Group proposed approach with the RWQCB EO and other staff in September. Jason will speak with David Gibson (EO) on July 20 regarding this. Jason and Martha will coordinate their schedules to make this presentation.
14. Barry will also speak with David Gibson on July 20 regarding a time to present the SMR Nutrient Initiative Group proposed approach in September.
15. Barry and Cynthia Gorham will seek informal affirmation and support for commitments from the RWQCB for a staff person and decision makers' time.
16. Jason and/or Dave will identify 3-4 discharger participants and 1-2 other participants to attend the meeting with the RWQCB. This action item will be conducted once a date is set for the RWQCB presentation.
17. Barry will send an advance list of monitoring locations and parameters from the agriculture waiver program within two weeks to Dave and Martha.
18. LWA (Ashli Desai) will develop a scope of work to gather additional nutrient data from agricultural, urban, reclaimed water and groundwater. Ashli will:
 - a. put together a budget to complete a review of this data;
 - b. vet with the County of San Diego;
 - c. put together list of data sources by August 30th; and
 - d. conduct a data gap analysis of available data completed by late September.
19. San Diego County will provide notice of the upcoming agricultural waiver meeting . Sheri McPherson will forward the notice tomorrow.
20. Barry will add the SMR group to the agricultural group mailing list.

Introduction

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

Review of Meeting Summaries and Action Items

Dave Ceppos conducted a review of the meeting summaries from June 7, 2012 and June 28, 2012, and inquired of the group whether anyone had changes. Camp Pendleton had previously submitted one change which was incorporated. The June 28, 2012 meeting minutes were also reviewed. Changes were as noted in action items above. No other changes or comments were voiced.

Coordination Decision: Both the June 7th and June 28, 2012 meeting minutes were adopted as final with the proposed changes.

General Updates

The San Diego Integrated Regional Water Management Grants (IRWM) will open a call for round 2 of Proposition 84 projects (Prop 84) during a two month window in September. Full proposals are due to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in March 2013.

Overall, there are \$1 billion in funds available, \$91 million of which is allocated to the San Diego area. This money will be divided based on a land use and population formula. The San Diego

area is anticipated to receive about \$10 million in funding from this round. The San Diego area received \$7.9 million in round 1.

Rancho California Water District (RCWD) is seeking Prop 84 planning grant funds to update the Upper Santa Margarita IRWM Plan, develop a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) for the Temecula basin and conduct an Anza groundwater study. They are in the RFP process to select consultants to assist them.

Camp Pendleton has just finished their review of their (SNMP). They indicated that a SNMP workshop will be held at the end of August or early September and will look to coordinate information from their SNMP process with RCWD.

Discussion of Revised Management and Monitoring Questions

The management and monitoring questions were presented. Major revisions included the inclusion of estuaries, dry and wet weather monitoring conditions, and approaches on how to address only listed reaches. Unlisted regions are not being taken out of consideration but are proposed to be a lower priority.

Martha discussed how baseline will be of the existing conditions in SMR watershed streams, rather than a reference stream from a different watershed.

Martha and the group discussed how an alternate regulatory approach based on indicators such as algal biomass is preferred. Concentrations in the Basin Plan were intended for dry weather, not wet weather, and are being applied in wet weather, which is not considered by the SMR stakeholders as appropriate. Wet weather nutrients proposed are not regulated outside of dissolved oxygen (DO). Continuous monitoring is recommended and it was noted that there is a need to adhere to requirements and text in existing permits because that is how the project will be regulated. Monitoring used in tandem with modeling will be used to establish a more continuous data set.

Resource Decision: The revised management and monitoring questions were made final and adopted by consensus of the Steering Committee. The TAC was given approval to proceed with developing the Management and Monitoring Plan.

Memorandum about Criteria for Consideration of Non-Listed Streams

Martha presented a memo that she and Scott Thomas prepared that defines the criteria for which a stream will be evaluated for inclusion the current effort. This provides the framework for the inclusion of reaches suspected to have a problem but that are not currently on the 303(d) list as impaired by nutrients. A short list of additional streams will be developed based on the criteria in this memo.

The criteria are as follows:

1. The stream must flow for at least 30 consecutive days per year. The assessment cannot be conducted unless the stream flows long enough to develop an algal biomass.
2. If the stream flows for at least 30 consecutive days per year, determine if existing data or best professional judgment indicate that the stream's nutrient loading presents a threat to river health.

The meeting participants agreed that it would be advantageous for all tributaries to be subjected to some level of assessment. This could be a simple site walkthrough; however, data would be preferable. Emphasis was noted for Sandia, Stone, Devils, and Fallbrook Creeks as the starting points and if they have water quality challenges, then tributaries further upstream should be included. Any additional creeks and tributaries would be included as optional line items in a

revised cost estimate. It was also noted that if the inclusion of the additional streams was cost prohibitive, the stakeholders could each walk through their respective areas to assess algal biomass.

There are approximately eight to ten gauging stations in the SMR watershed based on a cursory review of the USGS web site. Not all of these are still active or have continuous flow records. Certain types of flow gauging often show no flow but visual observations may indicate some flow and that visual confirmation is important. It was stated that there had historically been significant field observations made regarding flow and that when the management and monitoring plan is finalized it can include such data and a statement that further investigations can be conducted if deemed necessary.

Discussion of Executive Officer and Regulatory Subgroup Briefings

Martha presented a draft PowerPoint presentation to be given to the RWQCB and other regulatory representatives regarding the SMR Group's proposed approach. There were numerous revisions to the presentation captured by Dave within the draft presentation slides. The end result was a comment period of one week to submit edits to Dave and Martha and the scheduling of a Webinar presentation of the revised presentation to the group on August 14, 2012 at 1 PM.

The group agreed that the black background should be changed to a dark text on a light background.

The presentation will follow the following format: Introduction, Issue, Proposal, Benefits, What we want from the RWQCB and, Why the SMR Group's request is important.

The group agreed that this project provides benefits to the RWQCB and that it is desirable to approach this project as a partner with the RWQCB. The key benefits to the RWQCB are: Advanced work on a 303 (d) list water body by parties other than the RWQCB, support for the Basin Plan Triennial Review and, data and stakeholder support for the TMDL.

The group agreed that they want buy-in on the process from the RWQCB. Buy-in will come in the form of a commitment of a staff person for meetings and decision-making time to provide review of the technical approach and documents (work plan and Quality Assurance Project Plan [QAPP]) in a timely manner. It was suggested that RWQCB commitment should be documented on the public record through the establishment of an MOU with the RWQCB. The group will seek informal affirmation in the near term until an MOU is established and move forward in good faith in parallel with the RWQCB until then.

The presentation to the RWQCB will present short term requests for confirmation, hopefully received during the presentation, and long term items for consideration of nutrient water quality objectives. There are two decisions for the RWQCB: 1) commit staff for the short term to work on this project, specifically to review the monitoring work plan and QAPP; and 2) Consider an MOU to memorialize a longer term commitment to the SMR NIG project. The rest of the briefing will be on the technical approach and important policy decisions that RWQCB will need to consider in the future.

The RWQCB meeting will need to include Martha and Jason as presenters. The group agreed that it will be beneficial to have up to five other SMR participants at the presentation including 2-3 discharger and 1-2 non-discharger organizations.

Allocation Scenarios

Ashli presented four main approaches to developing load allocations.

1. Identify sources and assign concentrations. (TMDLs in California)
2. Basin Plan objectives turned into loads. (TMDLs in California)
3. Percent reduction from existing concentration or loads
4. Optimization approach (resource intensive).

The TetraTech modeling effort is for wet weather loading. However, dry weather is more important and the estuary must also be considered. Wet weather loads are only important in depositional areas. The group agreed to start the simple allocation scenario and move into a more complicated one, after collecting additional data and refining the model. It is very difficult to discern the MS4 contributions from the groundwater gaining reaches. Developing a model that couples groundwater and surface water would be advantageous. There is a recognized need to understand how management actions would result in changes in the SMR.

Barry noted that there is a potential to collaborate with the agricultural waiver group. RWQCB staff are waiting for results of the first round of monitoring of agricultural waiver areas (due December 2012). The group agreed to proceed down a path of assessing what can be collected under the agricultural waiver program.

The SMR watershed has a unique upper and lower basin. The question was asked as to what collective impact the upper basin has on the lower basin. Available data could show where the loads are coming from. Agricultural water use determination may start with reviewing water bills. It was stated that most would be on city water and that some districts track water use which could be a source of information. Some may already have reports.

Ashli noted that LWA is in possession of a lot of existing agricultural data from other regions. However, LWA would need permission to use this data from its sources and monies to perform the work. Ashli will work with the County of San Diego to determine if funding is available and appropriate for this work. If so, LWA will obtain permissions to use the data and develop a list and data gap analysis of the data.

The group was notified that an agricultural waiver stakeholders' group meeting is scheduled for July 30, 2012 and will be held quarterly thereafter. It was discussed that in addition to past requests, a new request should be made to the agricultural waiver groups to attend the SMR Nutrient Initiative Group meetings since it is likely agricultural interests will be identified as nutrient dischargers in the watershed.

Parking Lot:

- Estuary Modeling
- Provide additional funding to SCCWRP for upper and lower river modeling (including addressing EPA and RWQCB modeling and the watershed loading model created by Tetra Tech and supported by the EPA through Region 9)
- Further refinement and recommended educational discussions on competing beneficial uses, critical beneficial uses, and how those have been handled with Loma Alta

Next Meeting:

August 30, 2012
9:30am-3:30pm.
Rancho California Water District
2nd Floor Conference Room
42135 Winchester Road
Temecula, CA 92589-9017