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California Water Quality Monitoring Council

Council Meeting Notes

December 7, 2009 – 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Conference Room 550 – Fifth Floor
Joe Serna Jr. Cal/EPA Headquarters Building
1001 I Street, Sacramento

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Monitoring Council Members and Alternates in attendance:

Jonathan Bishop	Armand Ruby	Stephen Weisberg
Sarge Green	Steven Steinberg	

Monitoring Council Alternates in attendance:

Mike Connor	Val Connor	Terry Macaulay

Others in attendance or on the phone:

Leo Anguiano	Nancy Kapellas, SWRCB, OIMA
Steve Becker, DTSC	Karen Larsen, SWRCB, OIMA
Brock Bernstein, Consultant to SWRCB, OIMA	Brian Lewis, DTSC
Bob Brodberg, OEHHA	Jon Marshack, SWRCB, OIMA
Clay Brondow, CalFire	Jason Moore, DWR
Bud Duke, DTSC	Shelly Moore, SCCWRP
Terry Fleming, USEPA, Region 9	Bruce Posthumus, San Diego RWQCB
Sam Harader, SWRCB, DWR	Jeffrey Rosen
David Harris, Natural Resources Agency	Shannon Similai, DTSC
Lisa Hazard, SCCOOS	Peter Williams, IBM
Karl Jacobs, SWRCB, OIMA	Carolyn Yale, USEPA, Region 9
Jeff Kapellas, SWRCB, OIMA	

ITEM:	1
Title of Topic:	INTRODUCTIONS AND HOUSEKEEPING
Purpose:	a) Introductions b) Review notes from September 29, 2009 Council meeting c) Review agenda for today's meeting
Desired Outcome:	a) Approve September 29, 2009 Monitoring Council meeting notes b) Adjust today's agenda, as needed
Attachments:	Notes from September 29, 2009 Council meeting
Contact Person:	Jon Marshack · jmarshack@waterboards.ca.gov, (916) 341-5514
Decisions:	a) September 29, 2009 meeting notes were approved with the deletion of Armand Ruby as havening attended that meeting b) The focus of aquatic ecosystem health (item 4 in September 29 meeting notes) needs to be broadened to include more than fish c) Discussion item added to agenda – current ineffectiveness of monitoring at water bond grant projects – accountability (Val Connor)

Action Items:	a) Begin discussion with NOAA on Mussel Watch with ecosystem health focus; coordination with CCLEAN and SFEI mussel programs
	b) Stephen Weisberg will represent the Monitoring Council at upcoming meetings on marine mammals (January) and MARINe (March)
	c) Water Bond Grant Project Monitoring
	i) Val Connor will follow up on the effectiveness of monitoring with the three organizations that provide grants from water bonds – Water Boards, Department of Water Resources, Department of Public Health
	ii) Alternate strategy for grant project effectiveness monitoring to be developed for Monitoring Council review and approval

ITEM:	2
Title of Topic:	**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES**
Purpose:	a) State budget update (Jonathan Bishop)
	b) Outreach to state government organizations update (all)
	c) Resignation of Sam Mowbray and selection of replacement member (all)
	d) Comprehensive Monitoring Program Strategy update (Brock Bernstein)
	e) 2009 Annual Progress Report to agency secretaries and key legislators (all)
Desired Outcome:	a) Information
	b) Selection of new Monitoring Council Member representing regulated POTWs
	c) ***Comprehensive Monitoring Program Strategy***
	i) Any additional comments or thoughts on the draft that was distributed at the September 29, 2009 meeting
	ii) Decision on what Council wants to present to, what they want to know from, and commitments desired from the two agency secretaries and key legislators
	d) ***2009 Annual Progress Report –*** Decision on how the annual report differs from the strategy document and what it needs to include
Background:	a) On November 3, 2009, Sam Mowbray announced that he would be stepping down as the regulated POTW representative on the Monitoring Council. He recommended that his alternate, Mike Connor, be nominated to be his replacement.
	b) ***Comprehensive Monitoring Program Strategy*** – At the September 29, 2009 meeting, the Monitoring Council decided to delay completion of the comprehensive monitoring program strategy until Spring 2009. The Council agreed to share a draft of the strategy with the two agency secretaries and key legislators and staffs to obtain their perspective on the Monitoring Council's role, empowerment, and relationship to the agencies. Their feedback will be used to refine the strategy. In today's meeting, discussion during agenda items 3 and 6 will be used to update the draft strategy.

	c) In the December 1, 2008 Recommendations Report, the Monitoring Council agreed to make an annual progress report to the agency secretaries: "On an annual basis, beginning in December 2009, the Monitoring Council will report back to the agency secretaries on progress made in implementing the Council's vision, and in a manner that supports Cal/EPA's conduct of a triennial audit of the effectiveness of the comprehensive monitoring program strategy, as called for in the legislation. The first of these annual reports will contain the Monitoring Council's recommendations for the development of the comprehensive monitoring program strategy."
Attachments:	a) Mowbray Resignation Message (November 3, 2009) b) Monitoring Council Recommendations to Agencies (December 1, 2008) c) Comprehensive Monitoring Program Strategy (September 21, 2009 draft) d) 2009 Annual Progress Report draft outline
Contact Person:	Jon Marshack jmarshack@waterboards.ca.gov, (916) 341-5514
Notes:	The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) and Tri-TAC were involved in the endorsement of Mike Connor to represent the regulated community-POTWs on the Monitoring Council.
Decisions:	The Annual Progress Report will be sent to the agency secretaries before the end of December 2009.
Action Items:	a) Jon Marshack will draft a letter to the two agency secretaries indicating that Mike Connor will replace Sam Mowbray as the representative of the regulated community-POTWs on the Monitoring Council unless the Monitoring Council Co-Chairs are otherwise notified b) Mike Connor will begin the search for a person to act as his alternate on the Monitoring Council c) For the comprehensive strategy document, Armand Ruby will send suggested language to Brock Bernstein to emphasize the Monitoring Council's primary responsibility of improving monitoring programs, as required by SB 1070 d) Monitoring Council members have 1 week to review 2009 progress report draft and provide comments to Brock and Jon

ITEM:	3
Title of Topic:	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WATER BOARD'S SWAMP STRATEGY AND THE MONITORING COUNCIL'S COMPREHENSIVE MONITORING PROGRAM STRATEGY
Purpose:	a) Broaden the October 13 discussion between Jonathan Bishop, Linda Sheehan, and Val Connor to the entire Monitoring Council. Discuss governance issues relating to how often the Council will meet and for how long into the future. Current budgetary constraints factor into this latter topic. b) Proposal to highlight connection between SWAMP and the Monitoring Council at the June 9, 2010 meeting, at which the SWAMP Roundtable

	members would also be present
Desired Outcome:	a) Agreement on the connection and differences between the two strategies and which organization is responsible for producing each one
	b) Agreement on governance issues relating to how often the Council will meet and for how long into the future
	c) Approval to move June 9, 2010 Monitoring Council meeting to Sacramento to coincide with the SWAMP Roundtable meeting (June 8 & 9), to focus the meeting on the connections between SWAMP and the Monitoring Council, and development of a stream ecosystem health internet portal.
Background:	a) At the February 2, 2009 meeting, the Monitoring Council decided that the comprehensive monitoring program strategy required by Water Code Section 13181(e)(1) would be a Monitoring Council product, due to the broader focus of the Monitoring Council as compared with the State Water Board.
	Pursuant to Water Code Section 13181(e)(7), the Water Board, in coordination with the Monitoring Council, is tasked with updating the SWAMP Comprehensive Monitoring and Assessment Strategy (called "needs assessment" in the legislation) "in light of the benefits of increased coordination and integration of information from other agencies and information sources." The SWAMP Strategy was written and accepted by USEPA in 2005. Water Board staff is currently updating the SWAMP Strategy to dovetail better with the Monitoring Council's strategy and to incorporate the last five years of progress.
	Jonathan Bishop, Linda Sheehan, and Val Connor met on October 13 to discuss the relationship between these two documents. Linda was concerned that both documents clarify the connection and differences between the two strategies.
	b) Existing budgetary constraints need to be considered in how the Monitoring Council moves forward in the short and longer term.
	c) In developing its strategy update, SWAMP is in the process of narrowing and strengthening its focus on those beneficial use/water body types and other items where it has strengths, leaving other beneficial use/water body types to the Monitoring Council's strategy and other theme-based workgroups. SWAMP will focus on:
	i) Healthy Streams Initiative, including the perennial streams assessment
	ii) Development of biological objectives
	iii) Bioaccumulation Oversight Group's ongoing efforts to assess safe-to-eat fish and shellfish in lakes and reservoirs, rivers and streams, and coastal waters
	iv) CEDEN development to support the theme-based internet portals as well as Water Board staff and regulated community needs
	The relationship between these activities and those of the Monitoring Council will be the major focus of the June 2010 Council meeting.
Attachments:	a) SB 1070 [see Subsections 13181(e)(1) and (7)]
	b) February 2, 2009 Monitoring Council Meeting Notes *[see Item #3, Decision 5]*

	c) [SWAMP Comprehensive Monitoring and Assessment Strategy](#) (Oct. 2005)
Contact Person:	Val Connor vconnor@waterboards.ca.gov, (916) 341-5573
Notes:	Legislation to implement the Monitoring Council's strategy would be beneficial.

Decisions:	a) The Monitoring Council agreed that the comprehensive monitoring program strategy called for in SB 1070 will be a Monitoring Council product. The SWAMP monitoring and assessment strategy will be updated by the State Water Board staff, but will be integrated into the Monitoring Council's strategy as an appendix. Also included will be an updated assessment framework.
	
	 b) The Monitoring Council's strategy will encompass all water body types and beneficial uses. The updated SWAMP strategy will have a more limited focus on wadeable streams, contaminant accumulation in fish/shellfish, biologic objectives, the assessment framework, and tools for QA and data management.
	
	 c) The Monitoring Council agreed that the level of effort implementing the strategy will depend on available funding. Until additional funding has been identified and secured, the Monitoring Council may need to meet less frequently, but will continue to pursue the creation of new workgroups and water quality portals as staff time permits. Change emphasis to developing new workgroups, rather than creating portals as proof of concept. Once new funding becomes available, the Monitoring Council will more aggressively pursue implementation of its comprehensive monitoring program strategy.
	
	 d) The Monitoring Council will have a long-term role to oversee implementation of the comprehensive strategy.
	
	 e) Equal participation and enthusiasm from organizations within both Cal/EPA and the Natural Resources Agency are needed for the strategy to be successful.
	
	 f) The Monitoring Council approved moving its June 9, 2010 meeting to Sacramento to coincide with the SWAMP Roundtable meeting (June 8 & 9), and to focus the meeting on the connections between SWAMP and the Monitoring Council, with the major emphasis on SWAMP reporting on:
	
	     i) Development of a stream ecosystem health portal
	
	     ii) Bioaccumulation Oversight Group – 2nd year lakes study data and coastal monitoring
	
	     iii) CEDEN
	
	     Draft agenda with desired outcomes to be sent to Monitoring Council for approval.

Action Items:	Briefings with the agency secretaries (first) and key legislators will seek to obtain concurrence on Decisions (a) through (e), above Linda Sheehan will join agency briefings

ITEM:	4
Title of Topic:	INTERNET PORTAL DEVELOPMENT
Purpose:	a) Update on internet portal development b) Review revised Safe-to-Eat Portal c) Review draft Portal Development Guidelines
Desired Outcome:	a) Information b) Approval to release the Safe-to-Eat Portal to the public c) Comments on draft Portal Development Guidelines
Background:	a) On October 26, Jon Marshack demonstrated the Safe-to-Swim and draft Safe-to-Eat portals to the Water Boards' Water Quality Coordinating Committee (comprised of the Board Members, Executive Director, and Division Chiefs of the State Water Board and the Board Members and Executive Officers of the nine Regional Water Boards). b) At the September 29, 2009 Monitoring Council meeting: i) OEHHA representative Bob Brodberg presented concerns regarding the draft Safe-to-Eat Fish & Shellfish portal. The Monitoring Council directed that specific revisions be made to the portal, that the Bioaccumulation Oversight Group (BOG) take ownership of the revised portal, and that the revised portal be brought back for Monitoring Council review and approval prior to going public. ii) Terry Fleming was tasked with attending the next meeting of the Multi-Agency Rocky Intertidal Network (MARINe) to encourage them to become a work group of the Monitoring Council and to develop a question-based internet portal. iii) The Monitoring Council decided that SWAMP and the Water Board's Healthy Streams Initiative should become a workgroup focused on stream ecosystem health and should develop a mock-up of an internet portal on that theme. iv) Jon Marshack was tasked with developing internet portal development guidelines for theme-based workgroups. v) The Council requested a plan for workgroups to post and deliver to agencies/organizations critiques of their monitoring and assessment programs. Reaction from the BOG is that this will take considerable time and there are no resources available to perform these critiques. It may be too early to address this until additional funding is made available. vi) Val Connor was tasked with talking to Chris Beegan about developing a workgroup for benthic invertebrates and sediment quality objectives (SQOs). A combination of the SQO science team and the stakeholder advisory committee may form the basis for such a workgroup. c) At their November 24, 2009 meeting, a revised Safe-to-Eat portal was demonstrated and the BOG voted to endorse its public release, pending

	Monitoring Council approval. BOG members were given until December 1 to review the portal in more detail and to identify any potential "show stoppers." The BOG also voted to take ownership of the portal and to continue to maintain, develop and refine it in the future. Their only caveat was that long-term stable funding will be needed for this effort.
	d) The Wetland Monitoring Workgroup has been working to develop their wetland ecosystem health portal mock-up into a working version that can be reviewed by Monitoring Council members prior to public release.
Attachments:	a) [September 29, 2009 Monitoring Council Meeting Notes](#) *[see Items #2 and #4]* b) [Internet Portal Development Guidelines](#) (November 16, 2009 draft)
Contact Person:	Jon Marshack jmarshack@waterboards.ca.gov, (916) 341-5514
Notes:	a) Thematic stewardship structure critical to success of portals b) Need a mechanism for timely and accurate updating of all portals
Decisions:	a) Safe-to-Eat portal approved for public release b) Focus groups should be used to review future portal development efforts

Action Items:	a) Obtain dummy URL with more intuitive name (e.g., mywaterquality.org) that links back to My Water Quality home page
	
	 b) Portal development guidelines
	
	    i) Monitoring Council will provide comments within two weeks
	
	    ii) Philosophical discussion needed at next Monitoring Council meeting

ITEM:	**5**
Title of Topic:	**IBM'S BIG GREEN INNOVATIONS AND SMART PLANET INITIATIVE**
Purpose:	Presentation from Peter Williams, IBM Distinguished Engineer, regarding their data management, analysis, and visualization tools related to water quality.
Desired Outcome:	Outreach to other related efforts that may include useful ideas or tools that could be incorporated into the Council's web portals.
Background:	This responds, in part, to the Monitoring Council's earlier request for occasional briefings from other groups developing tools and approaches that could support the Council's efforts. The IBM group has developed some tools for management, analysis, and visualization of water quality data.
Attachments:	[Presentation slides](#)
Contact Person:	Brock Bernstein brockbernstein@sbcglobal.net, (805) 646-8369
Notes:	a) Peter Williams offered to host data management group visit to IBM's Almaden facility near San Jose to demonstrate IBM products

	b) IBM services to the Nature Conservancy were provided pro bono
	c) IBM could be a source of services to the Monitoring Council workgroups
	d) IBM may be able to write to other foundations to request resources
Action Items:	Possible discussion of water supply – water quality interface at February Monitoring Council meeting

ITEM:	**6**
Title of Topic:	**DATA MANAGEMENT WORKGROUP**
Purpose:	a) Discussion on data management issues that have arisen during the development of the theme-based internet portals
	b) Formation of, role, and assignment of tasks to a Data Management Workgroup.
Desired Outcome:	a) Monitoring Council agreement on the membership of the Data Management Workgroup
	b) Decision on Monitoring Council charge to the Data Management Workgroup (e.g., how that group should operate, the scope of issues it should address)
Background:	A number of data management issue have arisen during the development of the initial internet portals, including:
	a) Many relevant data are not readily accessible in electronic form
	b) Shadow databases have been developed to feed data to the internet portals
	c) An exchange network (e.g., CEDEN) does not yet exist to allow the sharing of data across agencies and organizations and to provide data to the portals
	d) The use of multiple GIS platforms hinders the sharing of map-based tools across portals
	e) The State of California will be developing data management and GIS standards
	f) All parties need to commit to maintain and regularly update portal items that they have developed (e.g., Data & Trends map in Safe-to-Eat) as new information becomes available
	g) The use of multiple databases requires maintenance of common global IDs or common crosswalk tables
	In its December 2008 Recommendations report, the Monitoring Council stressed that a balance is needed between standardization and the flexibility needed by theme-based workgroups to accomplish their goals and to strive for innovative solutions.
	At the September 29 Monitoring Council meeting Brock Bernstein was tasked with further developing the data management group paper, including list of questions to be addressed, and inviting potential Data Management Group members and a representative of the California Office of the Chief Information Officer to attend the next Monitoring Council meeting for a structured discussion of organizing principles, mission, and tasks. *Invited individuals are requested to*

	bring their individual expertise to the discussion, and not necessarily as representatives of their respective agencies.	
	The focus of the Data Management Workgroup should be twofold:	
	• Looking inward to support portal development and maintenance and underlying data management tools and platforms	
	• Looking outward for new data management tools and concepts that would benefit the portals and underlying data structure	
	Once the Monitoring Council decides on the membership and tasks for the Data Management Workgroup, Brock and Jon Marshack will recruit the members, and schedule initial meeting(s).	
	A CEDEN planning meeting was held at SCCWRP on November 24, 2009. In that meeting, a proposed vision was outlined, including the following:	
	• Serve water quality data to the public, the legislature, and agency decision-makers by feeding data from a wide variety of sources to the theme-based "My Water Quality" internet portals	
	• Serve Water Board permit writers, Clean Water Act Section 303(d) and 305(b) water quality assessments, and the regulated community with ad hoc query tools that provide the ability to bring together water quality data in a user-defined manner	
Attachments:	a) [September 29, 2009 Monitoring Council Meeting Notes](#) *[see Item #2]*	
	b) [Data Management Workgroup Proposal](#) (September, 2009)	
Contact Person:	Brock Bernstein	brockbernstein@sbcglobal.net, (805) 646-8369
Decisions:	a) Standardization should be at the minimum level necessary to enhance data and information sharing/integration	
	b) Utilize national data management standards wherever possible	
	c) Need for cross communication between workgroups not necessarily limited to data management	
	i) Common questions; policy issues; linkages	
	ii) Emphasize creating relationships between organizations	
	d) No formal data management group currently needed	
	i) Gather relevant people on ad hoc basis and change group as needed	
	ii) Begin cataloging common data issues between workgroups	
	iii) Form data management group later to tackle common issues	
	e) Each workgroup needs to identify	
	i) Core data needed to answer their questions and who has these data	
	ii) Data management issues needing resolution/standardization	
	iii) Roadblocks preventing collaboration	
	f) Share results across workgroups to form collaboration between workgroups	
	g) Bring issues to IT experts as needed	

Action Items:	Develop instructions for theme-based workgroups to discuss at February Monitoring Council meeting

ITEM:	7	
Title of Topic:	**MEETING WRAP-UP**	
Purpose:	a) Summarize meeting b) Plan agenda for next Monitoring Council meeting on February 10, 2010 in Costa Mesa	
Desired Outcome:	Develop agenda items for February 10 meeting.	
Contact Person:	Jon Marshack	jmarshack@waterboards.ca.gov, (916) 341-5514
Notes:	See decisions and action items for above agenda items	

January 13, 2010
approved with amendment February 10, 2010