California Wetland Monitoring
Workgroup
(CWMW)
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
9:30 – 4:00
May 1, 2018
Dept. of Water Resources
3500 Industrial Blvd
West Sacramento, CA 95691

In Attendance

- o Sam Ziegler, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- o Melissa Scianni, USEPA
- o Joe Morgan, USEPA
- o Jennifer Siu, USEPA
- o Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon, Delta Conservancy
- o Cliff Harvey, State Water Board
- o Brendan Reed, State Water Board
- o Cristina Grosso, San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI)
- o Sarah Lowe, SFEI

- o Kate Huckelbridge, California Coastal Commission
- o Elaine Blok, USFWS – NWI
- o Kris Jones, Water Quality Monitoring Council (WQMC)
- o Nick Martorano, WQMC

By Phone, webcast:

- o Hilde Spautz, Department of Fish and Wildlife
- o Eric Stein, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

Review of Meeting Minutes

The February and May meeting minutes will be reviewed at the August meeting.

USEPA Mitigation Performance Evaluation Guidance

(Eric Stein, Joe Morgan) Information Item: A guidance document for mitigation performance evaluation is under development by USEPA Headquarters. Several states and tribes were consulted, including California. The CWMW discussed California interests in mitigation evaluation.

The needs most commonly noted included: guidance on selecting indicators to monitor; standardized data templates; recommendations for data management; and the need for a framework for interpreting data.

A modular approach to assessments was presented, organized by Mitigation Site Performance, Program Effectiveness, Resiliency of mitigation practices, and Data Management.

Incorporation of Indices of Biological Integrity (IBIs) and web-based GIS applications into performance standards was recommended since those are comparable across all project and wetland types.

Publication of the final document is planned for the Summer of 2018, with implementation to follow. The USEPA Region 9 office, which serves California is interested in working with California on implementation of these recommendations. It was noted that EcoAtlas can probably meet the recommendations for data management with a minor adjustements. Links to ambient data and permit data may require more substantial technical support.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. No action items identified for this item.

EcoAtlas Update

Sarah Lowe and Christina Grosso provided an update on EcoAtlas work under way through a USEPA grant to SFEI. A key task is adding compensatory mitigation sites to EcoAtlas and linking project impact sites to their mitigation site if possible. It is hoped that EcoAtlas can bring in mitigation bank polygons from RIBITS. However, regulatory agencies must require permittees to enter impact and mitigation sites into EcoAtlas for these functions to provide usable content.

Also, a site selection evaluation checklist that builds off the LA District checklist is being under development. EcoAtlas tools are being incorporated into this tool.

It is reported that the California Coastal Commission has some interest in incorporating EcoAtlas requirements into their permits. Kate Huckelbridge will consult with Cristina Grosso on this.

The most appropriate means of showing impact information has not been identified.

ACTION ITEM: Co-Chairs will emphasize to Paul Hann (State Water Board) the need for development of funding for eCRAM, EcoAtlas, and Project Tracker.

Project Tracker & Performance Measure Reporting Grant

Work under a USEPA Wetland Development Grant to the Delta Conservancy is under way. Linking project data between EcoAtlas and Delta View (so project proponents only must enter data once), and development of new capabilities for reporting in EcoAtlas) are among the tasks under this grant. For now, manual entry of project data into both databases is still necessary.

SFEI has met with several agencies to discuss their reporting needs and is working to modify Project Tracker to meet identified agency needs. Immediate tasks include:

• Setting up "group pages" for different users (e.g. Delta View, Joint Ventures, etc). Selecting the group will show all the projects within that group.
• Building a performance measures form to enter target performance measures and achieved performance measures, and to allow for tracking of progress towards meeting performance requirements. Information on progress will be shown on the project information pages.
• Finalizing the changes to EcoAtlas is expected for this spring and summer. Trainings are to be conducted next spring and fall. The grant ends in October.

ACTION ITEM: Discuss term definitions at a future meeting. Make sure we are using the same definitions for project type (creation, restoration, enhancement).

Level 1 Priorities and Committee Formation

Ongoing questions regarding how a Level 1 (L1) Committee should be conceived and were discussed. Questions include:
• Should our L1 definition include other remote sensed data beyond maps?
• Does CWMW have the capacity to incorporate and support an L1 committee?
• Can the emerging Delta Aquatic Resource Inventory (DARI) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) being set up under the Wetland Development Grant mentioned earlier today) serve as or become a L1 Committee? It was agreed that CWMW would supports this approach.
• Are there connections that should be made with the Estuaries Workgroup regarding DARI mapping?

Next Steps: Continue outreach to DARI to explore its assumption of the L1 identity. Plan for an update to the Monitoring Council on the Delta mapping efforts.

Monitoring Council Recommendations

Nick Martorano and Kris Jones: The California Water Quality Monitoring Council is in the process of refocusing and identifying priorities.   As part of that process, each workgroup of the Council has responded to a questionnaire circulated by the Council. Key concepts to emerge from that survey include:

- Workgroups need help with funding and outreach;
- Rethink how Council interacts with workgroups; have workgroups more involved in Council meetings,
- The Council should more actively promote cross-workgroup collaboration.

The Council also working to identify ways the Council can provide value to the agencies and make recommendations to the Agency Secretaries.   The Council is asking for input on:

- Areas that still need development and could use a Gap analysis,
- programs that need to improve method consistency,
- water quality parameters that need more numeric thresholds,
- emerging programs that need coordination (e.g. eDNA)

We note the main CWMW question that can't be answered: How do we document "no net loss" of wetlands. CWMW needs to agree on management questions and tools that should be used to answered these questions, and make those know to the Council.

ACTION ITEM: Josh, Shakoora, and Melissa will write up a response to Kris and Nick's questions and provide feedback to Kris and Nick by May 20.

CRAM Technical Bulletin Update

The process of revising the technical bulletin is well under way. The emerging document will be focused on regulatory uses, but will be applicable to non-regulatory uses also. Case studies or examples to include in the Bulletin are needed.

ACTION: (All) Provide case study examples to Eric Stein as soon as possible.

Updates

- L2 Committee - SFEI continues work on a stressor index that could be used independently or in concert with CRAM. Field teams will be testing the new procedure this summer. Enrollment in CRAM courses has been rather low to date.   The annual

CRAM Intercalibration exercises – "CRAM-a-ganza" -- will be in June in Orange County. A full report will be attached to future CWMW minutes.

- eCRAM funding- SFEI applied for EPA grant to fund updates, will hear in July if the project was funded.

<u>Future Agenda Items</u>

- EcoAtlas update, funding and tools (Josh/Tony)- **August**
- WRAMP training approach (Josh/Kevin)
- DARI (Josh)- **August**
- State of the State's Wetlands Report (Chris)- **August**
- Tech Bulletin Update (Melissa)- **August**
- Bay Area RMP/Permitting Program Update (Josh/Jen/Melissa)
- L1 Committee formulation (Josh)-**August**
- DEDUCE (Shakoora)
- State Board Dredge and Fill update (Ana)
- Performance Measure Reporting in EcoAtlas (Shakoora)
- eCRAM funding (Josh)- **August**
- EcoAtlas project type terminology (Cristina)- **August**