Minutes -- CA Wetland Monitoring Workgroup
May 7, 2013
State Board, 1001 I Street, Training Room 2 West, Sacramento, CA 95814

Minutes compiled by Cliff Harvey from notes by Cliff, Jon Marshack and Christina Sloop

Minutes presented in the boxed text below

9:30   Welcome and Introductions (Craig Wilson)

Craig Wilson (CDFW) presiding; Meredith Williams, Josh Collins, Christina Grosso (SFEI); Tom Cavanaugh, USACE; Gen Sparks, Marissa VanDyke, (Central Valley RWQCB); Jeffry Shu (CDFW); Eric Stein (SCCWRP); Cliff Harvey, Jon Marshack, Joanna Jenson (State Water Board); Kevin O'Connor (MLML); Paul Jones (USEPA); Christina Sloop (Bay Area Joint Venture). By phone: Ross Clark (MLML); Paul Jones (USEPA); Cori Ferrar, (USACE - LAD); Genevieve Cavanaugh (NRCS).

9:35   Review of Meeting Minutes from 2/5/2013 (Craig Wilson)

Minutes approved without debate.

9:40   WRAMP Implementation

- Recommendations for L2 Administration (Cliff Harvey, Kevin O'Connor)
- Cross program coordination: HCP/404 integration (Paul Jones. Josh Collins)

Expected outcome: Discuss revised implementation recommendations from the L2 Committee and receive an update on HCP/404 integration efforts.

The need for a common monitoring platform is recognized; we should avoid isolated monitoring plans that do not work together. Communication with HCPs and NCCPs is underway. It is noted that >1million acres in California would be covered in the HCPs that are in planning or already approved. CWMW should recommend that state Departments should work approve HCCPs via WRAMP, as stated in the state work plan.

Consensus was that a revised CRAM technical guidance memorandum is needed, and that the previously discussed CRAM FAQ document should be incorporated into any revision of the current CRAM guidance. This should be a stand-alone document; WRAMP should have a place to plug it in.

ACTIONS:

All CWMW members will review the next draft of the technical guidance document from Kevin O'Connor and Eric Stein, and identify any non-CWMW key regulatory staff who may need to be consulted.

Eric Stein will confer with Christina Sloop to incorporate the joint ventures perspective.

11:00 Online Tools

- EcoAtlas: What's a project? (Meredith Williams)
- Online 401 (Bill Orme)

Finalization is pending recommendations from the Monitoring Council on how to present Delta farmed wetlands. Ecoatlas staff will need a month after MC approval to implement changes in CARI, Ecoatlas and he Wetland Portal.

Eric Stein notes that in conversations with Coastal Conservancy, they indicate that they will be moving toward use of Ecoatlas.

ACTION: Jon Marshack expects to get a response from Jon Bishop this week to complete MC input, and will assist with a press release for the end of May, for use by Cal EPA, State Water Board, and all other agencies.

Ecoatlas will not "store" toxicity data or other data stored in CEDEN; data exchange should be used to bridge to those data.

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Expansion of project types to be included in the Wetland Tracker database and Ecoatlas was discussed. A definition of "project" for this purpose was approved by working group: *"A project is a place in space and time where an action occurs with a direct or indirect effect on an aquatic resource."*

Next steps:
• Identify list of priority objectives we want to achieve with EcoAtlas
• Identify information inputs necessary to accomplish objectives
• Identify who has or controls those necessary data inputs
• Develop a clear distinction between EcoAtlas and the wetland tracking function within EcoAtlas
• Develop outreach strategy

Christina Grosso presented a demo of the newly revamped eCRAM website; "soft release" is set for the end of May.

Report for On-line 401 application postponed due to absence of Bill Orme.

Ecoatlas exists to track projects for human projects in wetlands, in context of natural variability. We are making a conscious decision to keep the definition of project broad, to a accommodate a bigger range of partners. A working definition was proposed; Jon Marshack will work on final wording.

A **project** is a place in space and time where an action occurs with direct or indirect effects on aquatic resources occurs.

ACTION ITEM: get sub-group to set definition and categories.

12:00 Lunch

1:00   Level 2 Committee

- L2 Update (Kevin O'Connor, Cliff Harvey)
- CRAM Training Video (Paul Jones)

CRAM has obtained official endorsement from SWAMP. CRAM is the first method not developed in –house by SWAMP to receive endorsement.

An L2 roles and responsibilities document has been drafted. Module development for depressional and slope modules to undergo field trials this summer. The CRAM manual has been revised and updated. The voluminous appendices are not longer part of the main manual.

Promising preliminary results from Central Coast Wetland Group's development and validation of a Bar-Built Estuary module for CRAM were presented. This "BBE" module was proposed when data were produced showing anomalous CRAM results when the existing Estuarine module was applied to BBEs.

A study comparing Level 3 benthic macroinvertebrate data with CRAM assessment data is underway; conducted by Kevin Lunde, funded by SWAMP.

A draft CRAM training video was demonstrated by Kevin O'Connor and Cara Clark. These experimental presentations show promise, but will require considerable development to become widely useful in CRAM training.

2:30   Level 1 Committee (Kristen Cayce)

- Development of L1 Committee
- CARI Next Steps

Need for an L1 Committee continues to be recognized; lack of a person or agency willing and qualified to take on leadership remains a limiting factor. Alternatives to a formal committee were discussed.

Technical details for CARI and its interface with Ecoatlas were discussed.

Outreach to Joint Ventures will continue.

Eric Stein presented an update on the Status and Trends Project. Analysis of sources of error – and how to manage those sources - has been ongoing with staff from MLML, Cal Northridge, and SFEI.

2:45   Data Management Workgroup Coordination (Meredith Williams)

3:15   Updates

- SWAMP Endorsement of CRAM (Chris Solek)

SWAMP formally endorse CRAM on March 29th 2013. The CRAM QAPP was an important factor supporting the endorsement - CRAM is first assessment method not developed by SWAMP to be endorsed by SWAMP . The Level 2 committee will continue dialog with SWAM for long-term management of that endorsement; i.e., adaptive management for reaching QA objectives.

- 104(b)(3) RFP (Paul Jones)

This year's 104 grants will have $1.5 million available for disbursement. The RFP out now.   Proposals are due Tue June 11.

- State Wetland Policy (Bill Orme)

Cliff Harvey reported for BIll: Informal public review and stakeholder outreach process is wrapping up. The working draft of the policy continues to include support of CRAM as assessment tool.

3:30   Announcements

Next Monitoring Council Meeting May 29.

3:35   Next steps and future agenda items (Craig Wilson)

3:45   Adjourn

WEBEX INSTRUCTIONS:

Meeting Location Directions

State Water Resources Control Board
Room 2540
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Visitors will need to check-in at the reception area to receive a day pass to the building.

Coffee, tea, and food   will be available at the coffee shop in located in the lobby. Light snacks will be provided in the meeting room.   Please bring a brown bag lunch or money for lunch at the EPA building coffee shop or any of the many restaurants nearby

Directions:
Once on 1-5 in Sacramento
-   Take the J Street exit
-   Take J Street east to 11th and turn left
-   Go one block and turn left on I Street
-   Cal/EPA headquarters building will be on your right.

Parking
Metered parking (1,2, and 10-hour meters) is available around the building. Meter parking uses quarters. Recommended Parking lots: The closest lot is across from the building on 10th and I Street ($15/day), enter on 10th or 11th. Parking also available between H and I on 14th St., ($6/day if in by 9:30 and out after 4:30, otherwise $3/hr.).