



California Wetland Monitoring  
Workgroup  
(CWMW)  
Meeting Minutes  
9:30 – 4:00  
November 21, 2016  
State Water Resources Control  
Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, Ca 95814



## In Attendance

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Paul Jones, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Leana Rosetti, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Joseph Morgan, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Jenn Siu, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Josh Collins, San Francisco Estuary Institute  
Jon Marshack, Monitoring Council  
Kevin O'Connor, Central Coast Wetlands Group  
Tony Hale, San Francisco Estuary Institute

Melissa Scianni, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Elaine Blok, National Wetlands Inventory  
Bill Orme, State Water Board  
Cliff Harvey, State Water Board  
Joanna Jensen, State Water Board  
Ana Maria Saenz, State Water Board  
Hildie Spautz, Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Kris Jones, Monitoring Council

## Review of Meeting Minutes

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Minutes of the August 4, 2016 meeting were approved by voice vote with no objections. The minutes will be posted to the CWMW website and distributed through the email list.

## 2017 Meeting Schedule

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- February 7<sup>th</sup>, State Water Resources Control Board
- May 2<sup>nd</sup>, TBD
- August 1<sup>st</sup>, TBD
- November 7<sup>th</sup>, TBD

## Open and Transparent Data Water Data Act AB 1755

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Governor Jerry Brown approved Assembly Bill No. 1755, The Open and Transparent Water Data Act, on September 23, 2016. AB 1755 requires the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), in consultation with the California Water Quality Monitoring Council (CWQMC), the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) "to create, operate, and maintain a statewide integrated water data platform." The data platform must "integrate existing water and ecological data information from multiple databases and provide data on completed water transfers and exchanges." Integrating existing data sources from various state and federal agencies will make information more

“accessible, discoverable, and useable by the public” and promote transparency, openness, and “interoperability” of water data. Examples of existing data platforms may include:

- DWR’s information on State Water Project reservoir operations, groundwater use, groundwater levels, urban water use, and land use
- SWRCB’s data on water rights, water diversions, and water quality through the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN)
- CDFW’s information on fish abundance and distribution
- US Geological Survey’s streamflow conditions information through the National Water Information System
- US Bureau of Reclamation’s federal Central Valley Project operations information
- US Fish and Wildlife Service’s, Forest Service’s, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries’ fish abundance information

The timeline mandated from AB 1755 is very aggressive and does not allow agencies adequate time to consult. Government agencies named in the legislation have requested additional resources to address potential significant costs associated with implementation. If approved, these resources would appear in the Governor’s January 2017 proposed budget final amounts are unknown until the Fiscal Year 17/18 budget has been adopted by the legislature and signed by Governor Brown.

This open data framework should not supersede the EcoAtlas tool set. EcoAtlas already provides open access data and actively integrates with other systems to share that data. In addition, EcoAtlas address more parts of the “data life cycle” than would the open data framework.

Tony Hale, PhD, from the San Francisco Estuary Institute-Aquatic Science Center provided this information on AB 1755; please refer to the full [presentation](#) for more detail.

**Action Item:** Jon Marshack will work with Tony Hale to get on the February 28, 2017 Monitoring Council agenda as an information item to present EcoAtlas and CWMW tools in relation to AB 1755.

**Action Item:** Melissa Scianni will add this topic to the February 7, 2017 CWMW agenda for an update on progress.

## EcoAtlas Business Plan

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There is a need to develop an EcoAtlas Business Plan, which may depend on funding at the regional level. The business plan would include core elements of EcoAtlas that would apply to all users and region specific elements based on the needs of that region. It would also include detailed tool descriptions, history (timeline and funding sources), and target audiences. Part of the plan will cover ongoing maintenance and development costs of EcoAtlas but also address the need for funding for training and potential for development of specific tools. The CWMW recommends adding specific regulatory agencies as potential audiences. Tony Hale and Josh Collins will continue develop the business plan before the February 7 CWMW meeting and will provide a draft for the CWMW to review by the May 2 meeting. The CWMW should work with the Outreach Committee for help with contacting various agencies.

## L2 Committee Update

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The L2 committee has not yet provided a draft of their Quarterly Summary Report to the CWMW; however, it will be submitted soon. Updates given to the CWMW include the following:

- Brian Dailey has resigned from the SWRCB; new staff will be assigned to the L2 Committee.
- Joanna Jensen from the SWRCB will be taking over work that needs to be completed on the CRAM survey from Brian Dailey; however, Brian has volunteered to assist with finalizing the CRAM report.
- Regional Water Quality Control Boards have begun using the Episodic Stream CRAM Module. The L2 Committee is refining guidelines on when and how to use the module.
- The Central Coast Wetland Group has reported that riparian assessment scores (see riparian assessment method below) are now going into a regional wetland tracker, tied to EcoAtlas. The L2 committee is developing a strategy on how to get this model implemented in other regions.
- Updates to the various field books are being updated by Sara Pierce.
- The CRAM field book, v7.0, will be refined.
- The stress index will allow CRAM assessments to more carefully separate stress, buffer and condition within existing modules and these concepts are better defined within the methodology.
- CRAM training schedules are being announced for 2017, some of which will be available through the SWRCB's Training Academy.
- The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board has expressed special interest in training since the announcement of their adoption of EcoAtlas and WRAMP tools
- Training will most likely be scheduled for Southern California with focus on the new Episodic CRAM Module.
- The U.S. Army Corps has released draft Vernal Pool Mitigation and Monitoring Guidelines, which are available for public comment right now. The guidelines include CRAM as a performance standard as a way to determine baseline conditions.

## Outreach Committee Update

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An update from the Outreach Committee was not available.

## Bay Monitoring System Update

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A regional monitoring program is being developed for San Francisco Bay restoration efforts. There is concern that state and federal permitting could cause delays for restoration projects funded by Measure AA. Interagency meetings are being scheduled to develop permitting and monitoring strategies.

## CRAM Technical Bulletin Update

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The CWMW requests that the L2 committee begin working on an update to the [CRAM](#) Technical Bulletin. The update should include technical guidance on when to use the various CRAM modules and take into consideration suggestions made through participants in the CRAM survey, once those results have been

compiled. Once a draft is developed, the L2 committee will make the document available to the Corps and the regional water quality control boards before finalizing.

## Riparian Rapid Assessment Method

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The Riparian Rapid Assessment Method supports monitoring/assessment strategy to report on the current condition of the Central Coast's riparian resources. Development includes assessment tools for areas with various levels of access and creation of a map of riparian resources within the Central Coast region. Methods tested during development include methods from Spain, Ohio, Australia, Arizona and California. For more detail on the project, as results, please see the [Assessing Riparian Condition on the Central Coast presentation](#), developed by Kevin O'Connor from the [Central Coast Wetlands Group](#).

## Updates

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### *Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State*

The SWRCB is continuing development of the draft [Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State](#) (draft Procedures). The draft Procedures were released for public comment on June 17, 2016. The public comment period ended on August 18, 2016. SWRCB staff is in the process of addressing and responding to comments received from stakeholders. The goal is to have a new version of the draft Procedures available for public comment in May of 2017 and to bring the procedures before the Board for consideration in the fall of 2017. Schedules are subject to change.

### *CRAM Survey*

Joanna Jensen of the SWRCB presented preliminary [Results of the Users' Evaluation of the California Rapid Assessment Method](#). Results of the survey are expected in May 2017. The CWMW suggested considering conducting the survey a second time and perhaps filtering the comments submitted by the number of times they have used CRAM.

### *CA Wetland Program Plan*

Joanna Jensen of the SWRCB was updating the CA Wetland Program Plan. A draft was sent out at the end of December to the original co-signers for review. Updating the CA Wetland Program Plan based on the comments is currently assigned to Rebecca Fris, Department of Fish and Wildlife. The document will need to be finalized before the next grant cycle, which begins in December.

### *SWAMP Riparian CRAM Data Assessment*

Information on the correlation between CRAM and bio-assessment data was requested from data that has been collected by the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP).

**Action Item:** Jon Marshack will reach out to Lori Weber and ask for an update on efforts made on SWAMP/CRAM data assessment.

### *EPA Wetlands Grant RFP*

EPA is expecting the next Wetlands Grant RFP to be released in December or January.

# Announcements

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- Paul Jones, EPA, will be retiring shortly after the next scheduled CWMW meeting.
- Jon Marshack, Monitoring Council, will be retiring after the next two scheduled CWMW meetings.
- The next [CWQMC](#) is scheduled for Dec 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

# Future Agenda Items

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- CARI for the Delta: Coordination with the L1 Committee to help develop and implement a base map for habitat management
- Training for all WRAMP tools
- EcoAtlas business plan
- State of the State Wetlands Report
- AS 1755
- Grant RFPs
- CRAM Technical Bulletin
- CRAM Survey Results