

CALIFORNIA WATER QUALITY MONITORING COUNCIL
Joint Monitoring Council & SWAMP Roundtable Meeting Notes

Wednesday, June 9, 2010 – 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

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



Monitoring Council Members and Alternates in attendance:

Jonathan Bishop	Mike Connor	Steven Steinberg	Ken Schiff
Dale Hoffman-Floerke	Parry Klassen	Tom Lyons	Sarge Green

Others in attendance or on the phone:

Brock Bernstein, Consultant to SWRCB	Jason Lofton, Sac Area Sewer Dist.
Autumn Bonnema, CDFG	Michael Lyons, LARWQCB
Dennis Bowker, Consultant to SWRCB	Toni Marshall, SWRCB
Clay Brandow, Cal Fire	Jessie Maxfield, SWRCB
Bob Brodberg, OEHHA	Susan Monheit, SWRCB
Kit Brown, Dept. of Water Resources	Jason Moore, Dept. of Water Resources
Erick Burres, SWRCB	George Nichol, SWRCB
Lilian Busse, SDRWQCB	Pete Ode, CDFG
Dave Crane, CDFG	Dave Paradies, Consultant to CCRWQCB
Jay Davis, SFEI	Bill Ray, SWRCB
Jennifer Doherty, SWRCB	Eric Stein, SCCWRP
Steve Fagundes, SWRCB	Tom Suk, LRWQCB
Terry Fleming, USEPA Region 9	Meghan Sullivan, CVRWQCB
Jeff Geraci, CRBRWQCB	Karen Taberski, SFBRWQCB
BG Heiland, Dept. of Water Resources	Dawit Tadesse, SWRCB
John Hunt, UC Davis	Amara Vandervort, SWAMP QA Team
Nancy Kapellas, SWRCB	Pavlova Vitale, SARWQCB
Cass Lamerdin, MLML	Alisha Wenzel, CVRWQCB
Karen Larsen, SWRCB	Karen Worcester, CCRWQCB
Brian Lewis, DTSC	

ITEM:	1
Title of Topic:	INTRODUCTIONS AND HOUSEKEEPING
Purpose:	1) Introductions 2) Review notes from February 10, 2010 Council meeting 3) Review agenda for today's meeting
Desired Outcome:	a) Approve February 10, 2010 Monitoring Council meeting notes b) Preview what will be presented today and overall meeting expectations c) Adjust today's agenda, as needed
Attachments:	Notes from February 10, 2010 Council meeting
Contact Person:	Karen Larsen klarsen@waterboards.ca.gov , 916-319-9769
Decisions:	Notes for the February 10, 2010 meeting were approved without changes.

ITEM:	2	
Title of Topic:	ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES	
Purpose:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Agriculture Representative on Monitoring Council (Karen Larsen) 2) Briefing with Natural Resources Agency Secretary Lester Snow (Dale Hoffman-Floerke, Val Connor) 3) Letter of direction to the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup on implementation of their State Wetland & Riparian Area Monitoring Program (Eric Stein) 4) National Water Quality Monitoring Conference (Val Connor, Karen Larsen) 5) State budget update (Jonathan Bishop, Dale Hoffman-Floerke) 	
Desired Outcome:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Welcome Parry Klassen's return to the Monitoring Council 2) Information 3) Approval to send letter to California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup directing them to implement their wetland monitoring strategy. 	
Background:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Parry Klassen returns to the Monitoring Council after a year-long absence. 2) On June 2, 2010, Natural Resources Agency Secretary Lester Snow is to be briefed on SB 1070 and the Monitoring Council's vision for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of water quality and associated ecosystem monitoring, assessment, and reporting. The Monitoring Council requested that both Agency Secretaries and key legislators be briefed on the Council's vision and comments received prior to finalizing the Council's comprehensive monitoring program strategy. Cal/EPA Secretary Linda Adams was briefed in January. Briefings with Senators Kehoe and Alquist (authors of SB 1070) will be scheduled in the near future. 3) At the February 2010 meeting, the Monitoring Council endorsed in concept the strategy document "Tenets of a State Wetland & Riparian Area Monitoring Program (WRAMP)" developed by the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup (CWMW). The CWMW desired more specific instruction from the Monitoring Council to implement their strategy. A draft letter from the Monitoring Council to the CWMW has been prepared to fulfill this need and was sent to Monitoring Council Members for comment. A new paragraph has been added near the end of the memo to identify an early collaboration between USEPA, SWAMP and the Natural Resources Agency to fund and conduct focused wetland monitoring in the San Diego Region to augment the National Wetland Condition Assessment in 2011. The CWMW plans to use this letter to influence organizations within Cal/EPA and the CA Natural Resources Agency to better coordinate their monitoring, assessment, and reporting efforts through the CWMW, according to their strategy. 	
Attachments:	WRAMP Implementation Letter	
Contact Person:	Karen Larsen	klarsen@waterboards.ca.gov , 916-319-9769

Notes:	<p>Karen Larsen reviewed the background regarding the request to reinstate Parry Klassen as a member of the Council. There were no objections from Council members so the group welcomed Parry back.</p> <p>Dale Hoffman-Floerke noted that the briefing for Lester Snow had been rescheduled and she would provide an update at the August Council meeting.</p> <p>Eric Stein reviewed the draft letter from the Council endorsing the Wetlands Monitoring Workgroup strategy.</p> <p>Karen Larsen mentioned that Jon Marshack's presentation on the CWQMC at the National Water Quality Monitoring Conference in Denver was well received and that the CWQMC accomplishments are far beyond what other state monitoring councils are doing.</p>
Decisions:	<p>The Council agreed to sign the letter endorsing the Wetlands Monitoring Workgroup strategy.</p>

ITEM:	3
Title of Topic:	THE WATER BOARD'S SURFACE WATER AMBIENT MONITORING PROGRAM (SWAMP)
Purpose:	<p>Set the stage for later discussions of how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) SWAMP integrates into the Monitoring Council's comprehensive monitoring program strategy b) SWAMP and the Monitoring Council can help each other to reach common goals
Desired Outcome:	<p>Better understanding of SWAMP background, monitoring programs, tools, and support efforts and how these integrate with Monitoring Council efforts</p>
Background:	<p>Terry Fleming summarized the background of SWAMP, including enabling legislation, contracts versus staffing issues, and recommendations for improvement from the external peer review (Scientific Planning and Review Committee or SPARC). In the context of waterbody types and beneficial uses addressed, Karen Larsen reviewed SWAMP's statewide monitoring programs, including bioassessment (Reference Condition Management Program, Perennial Streams Assessment, and development of biological objectives), Stream Pollution Trends (SPoT), the Healthy Streams Partnership, and the Bioaccumulation Oversight Group (BOG). Karen Worcester summarized SWAMP regional monitoring efforts, focusing on how these augment and enhance statewide monitoring programs and address important regional water quality issues while coordinating and leveraging resources with the monitoring efforts of others, and explaining key differences in monitoring between urban and rural regions. Finally, Karen Larsen summarized SWAMP-developed tools and support structures – including data management (SWAMP database, California Environmental Exchange Network), Quality Assurance program, Help Desk, Clean Water Team, and Integrated Report tools – that clearly demonstrate how SWAMP expertise is helping others and SWAMP's ability to provide support and assistance to other theme-based workgroups and the development of new web</p>

	portals.	
Attachments:	Matrix of waterbody types and beneficial uses SWAMP statewide monitoring factsheet SWAMP regional monitoring factsheet CEDEN factsheet Clean Water Team factsheet Integrated Report Tools factsheet SWAMP PowerPoint Presentations (pages 2 through 39)	
Contact Person:	Karen Larsen	klarsen@waterboards.ca.gov , 916-319-9769
Notes:	<p>Much of the Council's discussion regarding the overview of SWAMP focused on the Healthy Streams Partnership. In particular, Council members suggested that DWR be involved so that entities working on the Integrated Regional Water Management Plans (IRWMP) get engaged in the process.</p>	

ITEM:	4	
Title of Topic:	SWAMP'S INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS	
Purpose:	Review existing roadblocks to SWAMP success, what could be accomplished with additional funding, and how the Monitoring Council may be able to help	
Desired Outcome:	Increased understanding of constraints on SWAMP and development of potential solutions	
Background:	SWAMP efforts are hampered by a number of constraints, including laborious contracting procedures, restrictions on out-of-state travel, fluctuating and uncertain funding, and inadequate staffing in Water Board planning and standards programs.	
Attachments:	SWAMP PowerPoint Presentations (pages 40 through 50)	
Contact Person:	Tom Suk	tsuk@waterboards.ca.gov , 530-542-5419
Notes:	<p>Tom Suk discussed institutional constraints that impede SWAMP from achieving its mission (i.e., severe limits on out-of-state travel, multiple restrictions and process problems that prevent SWAMP from executing efficient and effective contracts, and funding limitations that prevent SWAMP from adequately addressing many current and emerging issues), and he asked the Council to work with SWAMP to elevate the need for specific solutions to these constraints, especially contract relief/reform, which could save the state a considerable amount of money. The Council discussed, at some length, the difficulties SWAMP faces with respect to contracting. Specific recommendations for inclusion in the strategy are listed in the notes for item #6 below.</p>	

ITEM:	5	
Title of Topic:	UPDATED SWAMP MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY	

Purpose:	Review and comment on major changes in the SWAMP Comprehensive Monitoring and Assessment Strategy	
Desired Outcome:	Conceptual approval of the updated SWAMP strategy, to be appended to the Monitoring Council's strategy document	
Background:	<p>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. The SWAMP Strategy is being updated to dovetail better with the Monitoring Council's strategy and to incorporate the last five years of progress.</p> <p>The Monitoring Council has emphasized that both documents should clarify the connection and differences between the SWAMP strategy and the Monitoring Council's comprehensive monitoring program strategy. Existing budgetary constraints need to be considered in how the Monitoring Council moves forward in the short and longer term. In developing its strategy update, SWAMP has narrowed strengthened 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.</p>	
Attachments:	Updated SWAMP Strategy, Summary of Vision Statements, Goals and Objectives	
Contact Person:	Karen Larsen	klarsen@waterboards.ca.gov , 916-319-9769
Notes:	<p>SWAMP delivered four main messages to the Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should SWAMP receive additional resources, SWAMP would augment their existing programs and initiatives, not seek to address additional water body/beneficial use combinations. 2. SWAMP's highest priority is institutionalizing SWAMP in other Water Board programs through promoting SWAMP comparability. Similar efforts could help the Council encourage agencies to coordinate their monitoring more fully. 3. SWAMP endorses CEDEN as the vehicle for providing SWAMP data to the public. It is also envisioned that CEDEN will be the repository of data that feed the My Water Quality Portals. 4. The Healthy Streams Partnership packages two of SWAMP's statewide assessments (Stream Pollution Trends and Perennial Streams Assessment Monitoring Programs). The objective of the HSP is to not only identify streams that are impaired and determine how to fix them, but also to identify healthy streams and protect them from degradation. <p>One Council member recommended that SWAMP work with DWR to engage them in the HSP so that the Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (IRWMP) project proponents get involved. The Council did not have any additional input on SWAMP's strategy.</p>	

ITEM:	6	
Title of Topic:	STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM STRATEGY	
Purpose:	Review and comment on the latest draft of the Monitoring Council's strategy document	
Desired Outcome:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Approval of the changes made since the January 2010 draft 2) Direction on what points to emphasize in the document's Foreword 3) Direction on how funding will be addressed in the document 	
Background:	<p>At the February 2010 meeting, the Monitoring Council provided comment on a January 2010 draft of the strategy (see notes from February 10, 2010 Council meeting, Item #8). Potential items to emphasize in the Foreword include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Experience with workgroup formation and the development of initial web portals demonstrates that the Monitoring Council vision, as outlined in the December 2008 Recommendations Report, works b) To ensure success into the future, high-level management support will be needed, including broad-based organizational involvement and conflict resolution <p>On funding, it has become apparent that seed money is needed to get coordination going (i.e., workgroup formation) and to fund initial portal development. To date, such funding has come largely from SWAMP and USEPA. A similar funding commitment is needed from organizations within the Natural Resources Agency. Direction from the Monitoring Council is needed regarding who to ask for funding and from where the funding should come. Council Members also may need to get involved in seeing outside funding opportunities.</p>	
Attachments:	Monitoring Council Strategy, March 2010 draft	
Contact Person:	Brock Bernstein	brockbernstein@sbcglobal.net , 805-646-8369
Notes:	<p>The Strategy should include recommendations that directly address institutional constraints identified by the SPARC. Many of these relate to contracting (see SWAMP PowerPoint Presentations, pages 40 through 50). There is a significant need to consider reform of numerous substantive restrictions on state contracting, to streamline contracting processes, and to establish a standard overhead rate with CSU and other universities. In addition, the Strategy should recommend funding for out-of-state travel for SWAMP staff (and perhaps those from other agencies) to attend the biennial National Monitoring Conference (a SPARC recommendation). In addition, alternatives to contracting through the state should be investigated; these may improve efficiency by streamlining contracting, reducing overhead, and allowing for longer-term funding.</p> <p>Council members suggested the Strategy include recommendations on both agency to agency and agency to university contracting, starting with simpler fixes and then moving to more complex but also more cost effective fixes over the longer term. The Council agreed that the Strategy should include a recommendation to improve inter-agency contracting and also task staff to look</p>	

at additional impediments and get back to the Council with suggestions on how to address these. The second (i.e., tasking staff to look at impediments) should go directly to Jon Marshack and the Strategy should not necessarily be led up to include a detailed discussion of these. Council members could supply specific instances of contracting problems to help illustrate the magnitude of this problem. AB20 requires the Department of General Services to establish model contract language for the UC system, with a July 1 deadline, and this may be something that could help address contracting problems.

SB1070 already calls for improving the overall efficiency of monitoring and there are good examples of this having happened in parts of the state. However, this is harder to do in areas where there are not a lot of existing NPDES monitoring to trade off. A large amount of money is spent on grants project monitoring, a large portion of which is useless because it is fragmented and/or poorly designed and not able to answer questions. A portion (e.g., 5%) of grant funds could be allocated to a centralized pool for regional and more effective project monitoring. For example, monitoring of similar projects could be pooled to increase replication and statistical power. It would be useful to get a feel for the amount of contract dollars spent on monitoring. It might be hard to get that figure; the Strategy should make a statement about the importance of getting that estimate but not include the actual amount in the document.

The Strategy should identify next steps, including briefings for the Secretaries (say if have already occurred). The MOU also requires the Council to clarify its relationship to the agencies. The Strategy may also want to identify some sort of feedback process that involves the Secretaries; should there be something in addition to the Council's annual report, such as annual briefings?

Short discussion of whether the Strategy should include mention of the need for and utility of improved sensors and other advanced technology as means of increasing cost effectiveness. Jon Bishop suggested that this should more properly be considered at the workgroup level.

Remember that SB 1070 requires that the Council recommend the strategy, not implement it.

As decided at previous Council meetings, the funding section of the Strategy should clarify that the Council does not plan to fund efforts at the workgroup level. These are to be paid for by participating agencies / entities. This could come from agencies' existing budgets and/or from new money. The Council should consider whether it can assist with efforts to find or redirect funds to support workgroups. Redirection of existing funds could raise an equity issue, since most of that money comes from urbanized areas and there could be concerns about / resistance to redirecting funds to rural areas and/or issues other than permitting. In addition, permitted agencies may not have the flexibility to transfer or redirect funds to support broader workgroup efforts. On the other hand, the Water Boards can use the permitting approach to build flexibility into NPDES and other monitoring and to offset costs. This has been done both at the watershed scale and at regional scales (e.g., Bight Program). The Council could say that it recognizes the budget problems in funding its process and recommends that agencies consider monitoring offsets as part of the funding mix. Another option is that other permitting programs beyond NPDES might consider contributing. In-kind support should also be mentioned.

The budget part of the Strategy could just say what is needed without trying to specify exactly where it would come from. Broad statements about potential

	<p>sources (e.g., offsets, percentage of grant funds) are OK but it's not necessary to specify exact amounts.</p> <p>Discussion of the appearance in the budget of huge annual growth rate. The budget should show a gradual increase in annual expenditures that matches the phased development plan described in the document. This could be explained partly by an increase in the overall number of portals but also by the fact that the easier portals were done first and the more complex portals and more sophisticated tools will come later.</p> <p>Budget portion should also stress that the money is not going just to create more data but also more tools, more synthesis, and more services for users.</p> <p>Comments that \$3 million for 30 portals seems too low, but have to clarify that we are talking just about the Council's portion, not the full amount that would be provided by workgroup member agencies / entities. Also need to stress that the Council is not talking about creating more data (necessarily) but about creating more access, improved synthesis, etc. Much of this will not happen without the Council and its coordination role.</p> <p>Emphasize that all this future development will be tracked and evaluated with respect to the performance measures.</p> <p>Discussion of whether 30 portals are too many, whether and how they should be packaged. They are currently packaged into four main portals on the Council's home page, but there are distinct ecosystem components (e.g., rocky intertidal) that each have their own data types and sources and issues. The discussion in the Strategy should make it clear that the 30 portals refers to this lower level of detail and that there is no intention of having 30 separate portals on the Council's main page. Might be useful to describe plans for higher-level portals that would contain lower-level portals and also provide a means of integrating across portals.</p> <p>In terms of the recommendations, DPH should be invited to sign, not required to sign.</p> <p>The Strategy should also stress the need for integrating across all data types and agencies as needed to answer questions. Endangered Species Act issues and programs provide a good opportunity for addressing data integration problems at regional and larger scales. Anadromous fish are a good example, and they cut across a number of state and federal agencies.</p>
<p>Decisions:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Strategy should include recommendations that directly address institutional constraints identified by the SPARC, including streamlining contracting procedures, lifting restrictions on out-of-state travel for SWAMP staff to attend the National Monitoring Conference, and ensuring adequate and stable funding for SWAMP into the future. b) Improving the grant monitoring process would be in line with the Council's mandate. The strategy should state the importance of getting an estimate of the amount of grant dollars spent on monitoring. c) Strategy should identify next steps (e.g., briefings for agencies). d) Strategy should identify Council's relationship to agencies and agency Secretaries. e) Funding section of the Strategy –

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Council does not plan to fund efforts at the workgroup level; should come from participating agencies/entities. ii) Budget should show a gradual increase in annual expenditures that matches the phased development plan described in the document. iii) Money is not going just to create more data but also more tools, improved synthesis, greater access, and more services for users. f) Future development will be tracked and evaluated with respect to the performance measures. g) No intention of having 30 separate portals on the Council’s main page. h) Recommendation – DPH should be invited, not required, to sign MOU. i) Strategy should also stress the need for integrating across all data types and agencies as needed to answer questions.
Action Items:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Council members (and SWAMP staff) to send Jon Marshack specific examples of contracting problems. b) Jon Marshack to provide Council with review of contracting impediments and potential solutions, not as part of Strategy document.

ITEM:	7	
Title of Topic:	SWAMP ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK	
Purpose:	Review and comment on a proposed assessment framework for SWAMP that could also be used by other theme-based workgroup assessment efforts	
Desired Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Approval on the general direction of a proposed SWAMP Assessment Framework 2) Approval to use the Assessment Framework to guide other theme-based workgroup efforts outside of SWAMP 3) Approval to include the Assessment Framework as an appendix to the Monitoring Council’s strategy document 	
Background:	As part of the update of the SWAMP Strategy, the Statewide Assessment Framework for SWAMP is being developed. Similar frameworks from other states have been evaluated in the process of developing the draft. Emphasis of the document is on the development of assessment questions, methods to answer those questions, thresholds by which to guide the assessment, and report cards to convey the assessment results. Comparability with other programs so as to increase the ability to use data from other sources is emphasized. While written for SWAMP, the Assessment Framework could also guide the efforts of other theme-based workgroups, thereby integrating with the Monitoring Council’s strategy.	
Attachments:	SWAMP Assessment Framework annotated outline	
Contact Person:	Brock Bernstein	brockbernstein@sbcglobal.net , 805-646-8369

Notes:	The Council did not have time to review the outline prior to the meeting so they did not have input on the document during the meeting.
Action Items:	Brock will send the draft framework to the Council members for comment via email.

ITEM:	8	
Title of Topic:	HEALTHY STREAMS PORTAL DEVELOPMENT	
Purpose:	Review and comment on a mockup of a new theme-based portal on stream aquatic ecosystem health	
Desired Outcome:	Approval to build the new portal, based on the mockup and Monitoring Council comments	
Background:	In December 2009, the Monitoring Council asked SWAMP to develop a mockup of a stream ecosystem health portal based on SWAMP's statewide monitoring programs.	
Attachments:	Healthy Streams Portal Mockup	
Contact Person:	Terry Fleming	fleming.terrence@epamail.epa.gov , 415-972-3462
Notes:	<p>The Council was in favor of proceeding with developing a Healthy Streams portal. They recommended that fish monitoring information collected by DFG or others be incorporated into the site. Fraser Shilling (UCD) mentioned that similar work to develop watershed report cards has been done at local scales throughout the State and suggested that the Healthy Streams Workgroup review the methods that were used for those projects. The Council also pointed out that the current portal mock-up is Water Board-centric and should be expanded to capture additional data sets.</p> <p>The Council also requested an update on the status of the existing portal efforts.</p>	
Decisions:	The Healthy Streams Workgroup should proceed with developing the portal.	
Action Items:	State Water Board staff will provide updates to the Council as updates or progress is made on the existing portals.	

ITEM:	9	
Title of Topic:	MEETING WRAP-UP	
Purpose:	<p>a) Summarize meeting</p> <p>b) Plan agenda for next Monitoring Council meeting on August 11, 2010 in Sacramento – proposed emphasis on monitoring and assessment efforts within the California Natural Resources Agency and how they should be involved in fulfilling the Monitoring Council's vision</p>	

Desired Outcome:	Develop agenda items for August 11 meeting.	
Contact Person:	Karen Larsen	klarsen@waterboards.ca.gov , 916-319-9769

August 2, 2010
Approved August 11, 2010