

CALIFORNIA WATER QUALITY MONITORING COUNCIL

Monitoring Council Meeting Agenda

Thursday, August 27, 2015 – 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

First Floor, Training Room 1 East/West
 Joe Serna Jr. Cal/EPA Headquarters Building
 1001 I Street, Sacramento



IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!

Meetings of the Monitoring Council are open to the public. Times indicated in the agenda are approximate. The order of agenda items is subject to change. Actions of the Monitoring Council are advisory to the Secretaries of the California Environmental Protection Agency and the California Natural Resources Agency.

Handouts, presentations, notes, and related Monitoring Council meeting information will be available prior to or after the meeting at http://www.MyWaterQuality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/meetings.

Remote access to the meeting will be available via WebEx. To join the WebEx on-line meeting, click on this link <https://waterboards.webex.com/waterboards/j.php?MTID=m9ab898f021cf7cf9ecfd43a3ea093886>, enter your name and email address, enter the meeting password "cwqmc", click "Join" and follow the instructions that appear on your screen. Please log in a few minutes before the meeting starts to allow WebEx to set up the meeting connection. WebEx will automatically set up Meeting Manager the first time you join a WebEx meeting. Audio connection is by teleconference by dialing (877) 931-5081 and entering the attendee access code 222 652 6. Existing audio equipment in our meeting room may limit the available quality of the connection.

For a map to the Cal/EPA Headquarters Building, visit: <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/EPABldg/location.htm>. For security purposes, all visitors are required to sign in and receive a badge at the Visitor Center to the left of the lobby upon entering the building. Valid picture identification may be required due to the security level. Individuals who require special accommodations are requested to contact the State Water Board's Equal Employment Opportunity Office at (916) 341-5881.

ITEM:	1	Approx. Time:
Title of Topic:	INTRODUCTIONS AND HOUSEKEEPING	10 minutes
Purpose:	1) Introductions (in the room and on the phone) 2) Review draft notes from May 29, 2015 Monitoring Council meeting 3) Review agenda for today's meeting	
Desired Outcome:	a) Approve May 29, 2015 Monitoring Council meeting notes b) Preview what will be covered today and overall meeting expectations c) Adjust today's agenda, as needed	
Attachment Link:	Draft notes from May 29, 2015 Monitoring Council meeting	
Contact Persons:	Kris Jones Jon Marshack	kristopher.jones@water.ca.gov , (916) 376-9756 jon.marshack@waterboards.ca.gov , (916) 341-5514

ITEM:	2	Approx. Time:
Title of Topic:	PUBLIC FORUM	Unknown
Purpose:	Any member of the public may address and ask questions of the Monitoring Council relating to any matter within the Council's jurisdiction under California	

	Senate Bill 1070 (Statutes of 2006) provided the matter is not on the agenda.	
Desired Outcome:	Information and potential agenda topics for a future meeting. No decisions can be made regarding items that have not received prior public notice.	
Attachment Links:	California Senate Bill 1070 (Statutes of 2006)	
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ITEM:	3	Approx. Time:
Title of Topic:	ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES	40 minutes
Purpose:	<p>These are expected to be brief informational items that could be expanded into more detailed discussions for future meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring Council position changes (Jon Marshack) Meeting dates for 2016 (Jon Marshack) Ocean Science Trust / Southern California Coastal Water Research Project joint post-doctoral fellow – MPA and ASBS Monitoring Coordination (Greg Gearheart, Liz Whiteman) CEDEN update and relationship with Clean Water Act Section 303(d) impaired waters listings (Jarma Bennett, Nick Martorano) Other brief announcements and updates related to the Monitoring Council's mission pursuant to Senate Bill 1070, Statutes of 2006 	
Desired Outcome:	Information and comment	
Background:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring Council Position Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulated Community, POTWs – In April of 2015, Mike Connor tendered his resignation and the California Association of Sanitation Agencies recommended that Phil Markle of the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (LACSD) replace Mr. Connor on the Council. Mr. Markle has served as the Alternate to Mr. Connor on the Monitoring Council. On May 13, a letter was sent from the Council Co-Chairs to the two Agency Secretaries recommending that Phil Markle become the Member representing POTWs. Agriculture – Parry Klassen has indicated he will be resigning from the Monitoring Council and endorsing his Alternate, Bruce Houdesheldt of the Northern California Water Association, to take his place. Parry has offered to stay on as an Alternate in this position. 2016 Meeting Dates – For the last few years, the Monitoring Council has met quarterly, in late February, late May, late August, and late November/early December. What are Council Member preferences for meeting frequency, days of the week, and times of the month for 2016? Joint OST/SCCWRP Science Integration Fellow – Recently, these two organizations collaboratively sponsored a fellowship to explore data exchange and joint assessment between monitoring programs of the Marine 	

	<p>Protected Areas (MPAs) and Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBSs). Julia Coates presented the results of her project, an index of ecosystem status for Southern California shallow rock reefs, to the Monitoring Council in May 2014 (see Item 7 of the meeting notes). In May 2015, Liz Whiteman of OST presented an update on the development of an ocean ecosystem workgroup and portal (see Item 7 of the meeting notes). During the discussion, Jonathan Bishop suggested that OST and SCCWRP explore funding options for an additional fellowship to further that effort, specifically relating to MPA and ASBS monitoring for rocky intertidal habitats. A new Science Integration Fellow would evaluate areas of intersection between monitoring efforts for MPAs, ASBSs, marine parks and sanctuaries and explore development of one or more working groups to synthesize multiple data streams into ecosystem condition assessments.</p> <p>d) CEDEN Update – The California Environmental Data Exchange Network has begun working with a contractor to create web services that will provide a two-way data connection with the federal Water Quality Exchange (WQX) that integrates monitoring data between USEPA, USGS, USDA, and others. Web services will also improve the CEDEN query tool and data feeds to the My Water Quality portals. In February 2015, the State Water Board amended California’s Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Listing Policy concerning the process by which the Impaired Waters List is compiled and adopted; to promote efficiencies in the manner in which data is solicited and assessed; and to streamline the public participation and water board review process. The amendment modified the definition of “all readily available data and information” to mean all data and information submitted to CEDEN.</p>	
Attachment Links:	<p>a) Phil Markle Recommendation Letter to Agency Secretaries d) CEDEN website</p>	
Contact Persons:	<p>Jon Marshack Kris Jones</p>	<p>jon.marshack@waterboards.ca.gov; (916) 341-5514 kristopher.jones@water.ca.gov; (916) 376-9756</p>

ITEM:	4	Approx. Time:
Title of Topic:	SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT (SGMA)	
Purpose:	Erik Ekdahl of the State Water Board’s Office of Research, Planning & Performance will provide an overview on California’s new groundwater management law and how it is being implemented.	
Desired Outcome:	Information and discussion	
Background:	<p>SGMA provides a new framework to support local groundwater management. Implementation will be through formation of local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) that develop groundwater sustainability plans for their basin. These sustainability plans will rely on the new tools and authorities SGMA grants to GSAs. All alluvial basins identified in Department of Water Resources (DWR) Bulletin 118 as high or medium priority must implement sustainability plans. GSAs must be formed in these high or medium priority basins by mid-2017, and must have sustainability plans in place by either 2020 or 2022, depending on the condition of the basin. If a basin fails to form a GSA, does not adopt a sustainability plan, or has a plan that DWR has found inadequate, the State</p>	

	Water Board will begin a state intervention process. During state intervention, the State Water Board has authority to collect groundwater pumping data and use that information to develop an interim management plan. An overview of current activities related to SGMA will be provided, including data management planning, coordination with DWR, and DWR development of regulations for sustainability plan requirements and basin boundary changes.	
Attachment Links:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) • Additional information on SGMA 	
Contact Person:	Erik Ekdahl	erik.ekdahl@waterboards.ca.gov ; (916) 341-5316

ITEM:	5	Approx. Time:
Title of Topic:	PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CALIFORNIA ESTUARIES PORTAL	30 minutes
Purpose:	Monitoring Council Assistant Director Kris Jones will present a mock-up of proposed changes to the look and feel of the Estuaries Portal as well as an example Delta Data Dashboard concept.	
Desired Outcome:	Feedback and approval to redesign the Estuaries Portal	
Background:	At the September 2014 Monitoring Council meeting (see Item 7 of the meeting notes), Stephanie Fong proposed updating the look and feel of the Estuaries Portal. While no mock-ups were presented at that meeting, the Monitoring Council did approve the request by the Estuary Workgroup to develop an updated look and feel for the Estuaries Portal, as long as the updated portal maintains the question-driven approach for navigation. However, it was noted that the current look and feel of the portals is limited by the State Water Board's use of an older state webpage style template. Given their existing staff resources, the Water Board has been unable to transition to newer state webpage style template. Water Board IT staff have since indicated that they will transition to an updated and more flexible state web page style template and that they would like to use the My Water Quality homepage and Portals to demonstrate this new model.	
Attachment Link:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current California Estuaries Portal • Notes from the September 3, 2014 Monitoring Council meeting (see Item 7) 	
Contact Person:	Kris Jones	kristopher.jones@water.ca.gov ; (916) 376-9756

LUNCH		Approx. Time:
On your own. Cafe on first floor. Other restaurants in close proximity to building.		60 minutes

ITEM:	6		Approx. Time:
Title of Topic:	DELTA PLAN INTERAGENCY IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (DPIIC) – HIGH-IMPACT SCIENCE ACTIONS		30 minutes
Purpose:	Rainer Hoenicke of the Delta Stewardship Council's Science Program and Taryn Ravazzini, DPIIC Coordinator, will discuss implementation of high-impact science actions identified by DPIIC and how the Monitoring Council's ecosystem health workgroups could be involved.		
Desired Outcome:	Direction from the Council on workgroup involvement in DPIIC science actions.		
Background:	<p>The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta falls within the jurisdiction of many state, federal, and local agencies. The Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC), comprised of the directors of many these agencies, serves as a high-level coordination body to align decision- and policy-making needs based on best available science associated with the immense challenges facing the Delta as the water supply hub for over 20 million people and a large part of California's farming sector. The DPIIC orchestrates the timely and strategic implementation of actions consistent with the policies and recommendations outlined in the Delta Plan. In May 2015, the DPIIC endorsed an initial list of high-impact science actions proposed by the Delta Agency Science Workgroup, prior to the development of the Science Action Agenda – a 3-5 year joint agency roadmap for reducing remaining uncertainties associated with contemplated management actions intended to restore the ecosystem while reducing water supply reliance on the Delta. The Workgroup is the primary entity responsible for reporting to DPIIC and overseeing progress of these science actions. DPIIC endorsement gave the Workgroup the opportunity to pursue joint implementation and management of these science actions with the support of its parent agencies.</p> <p>During the Workgroup's June meeting, it was suggested that some of the endorsed high-impact science actions build on efforts already initiated by workgroups of the Monitoring Council, create synergies among the myriad of initiatives and activities housed within individual agencies and consortia (e.g. Interagency Ecological Program, Monitoring Council workgroups), and fill gaps with coordinated funding sources.</p>		
Attachment Link:	DPIIC-Endorsed High-Impact Science Actions		
Contact Person:	Rainer Hoenicke	rainer.hoenicke@deltacouncil.ca.gov ; (916) 445-5825	

ITEM:	7		Approx. Time:
Title of Topic:	MONITORING COUNCIL – WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?		150 minutes
Purpose:	Monitoring Council Director Jon Marshack will set the stage and Council Co-Chair Alternate Greg Gearheart will facilitate a discussion regarding future direction of the Monitoring Council.		
Desired Outcome:	Direction from the Monitoring Council on future implementation of SB 1070 (Statutes of 2006).		

Background:

[SB 1070](#) and an interagency [Memorandum of Understanding](#) tasked the Monitoring Council with developing recommendations to the Secretaries of the California Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Agencies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of California's system of water quality and associated ecosystem health monitoring and assessment, and to ensure that the resulting data and information are made available to decision makers and the public via the internet. [Initial recommendations](#) were delivered in 2008 and experience implementing those recommendations led to the Monitoring Council's [A Comprehensive Monitoring Program Strategy for California](#), delivered to the Agency Secretaries in 2010.

The *Strategy* established a number of theme-specific workgroups, comprised of subject matter experts from a variety of governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations. Each workgroup was tasked with developing an internet portal to bring relevant monitoring data and assessment information for their theme to decision makers and the public. Portal development was envisioned as a mechanism to (1) highlight where gaps or redundancies existed in current monitoring programs, (2) where differences in methods or assessment strategies prevented combining data from multiple studies to enable broader or more in-depth assessments, or (3) where data management systems prevented sharing data across organizations and delivering it to the portals. Initial portal products capitalized on low-hanging fruit to create a proof-of-concept that would entice additional agencies and monitoring programs to participate in the theme-specific workgroups.

SB 1070 and the Monitoring Council's *Strategy* charged us to do a lot more than just put information on the web, though. The workgroups were intended to form lasting relationships implementing a portal design that would both require and motivate parties to solve monitoring and assessment coordination and data integration problems, with a focus on directly addressing management questions. The portals were intended to provide a conceptual structure to initiate dialogues between existing and emerging monitoring programs, thereby providing the opportunity to think more broadly than could be done otherwise, and enabling broader-based assessments than were previously possible. The *Strategy* included a set of performance measures by which existing monitoring programs could be evaluated and with which to determine where improvements were needed.

As part of the *Strategy*, the Monitoring Council took it upon itself to establish an implementation oversight role, guiding the workgroups in portal development and endorsing key monitoring and assessment improvement initiatives. Annual reports informed the agency secretaries of Monitoring Council progress in years between major report deliverables. In nearly every reporting, the Council made a number of recommendations, including the need for increased participation by departments within both agencies and dedicated funding for collaborative processes included within the *Strategy*.

One key decision made by the Monitoring Council was to provide a review deadline for each report sent to the agency secretaries. Transmittal letters gave the agency secretaries a date by which, if no comments were received, the Council would consider the agency secretaries to have concurred with the report. Written comments were never received from the agency secretaries on the major report deliverables nor on the annual progress reports. Individual briefings were held following submittal of the initial recommendations report and the *Strategy* document in which the agency secretaries praised achievements made by the Council and its workgroups. But no formal endorsement of Monitoring Council

	<p>recommendations has ever been received.</p> <p>SB 1070 and the MOU called for the Cal/EPA Secretary to conduct a triennial audit of the effectiveness of the <i>Strategy</i> in consultation with the Natural Resources Secretary. In late 2013, Cal/EPA Secretary Matthew Rodriguez was asked how he wanted the first audit to be conducted. In response, the Monitoring Council was asked to perform a self-audit. Each workgroup provided a self-evaluation and common themes emerged, which formed the basis of the first triennial audit report, delivered to the Agency Secretaries in December 2014. The audit concluded that the current effort based largely on volunteer actions and inconsistent funding was not sustainable and similar recommendations were made for increased departmental participation and dedicated funding.</p> <p>Meetings were held with Cal/EPA Secretary Matthew Rodriguez and Undersecretary Gordon Burns. These meetings were reported on at the May 2015 Monitoring Council meeting (see Item 4 of the meeting notes). Additional discussions are planned.</p> <p>Since the first triennial audit was completed, portal development progress for most themes has stymied over (1) availability of GIS-related staff time, (2) changes in database infrastructure needed to allow portals to access data, (3) lack of comfort by state agency IT personnel with open-source software solutions that have become key components of both estuaries and wetlands data management and visualization, and (4) uncertainty over control agency approval process for IT systems developed by third parties. Safe-to-Swim and Drinking Water workgroups have not met for well over a year, waiting for obstacles to be overcome.</p> <p>A lack of dedicated funding and management support has caused workgroup leadership and departmental participation to remain problematic for a number of the Monitoring Council's workgroups. Meetings with the departments of Fish and Wildlife and Pesticide Regulation staff to encourage participation have been answered with management declining to have their staff involved in workgroup efforts. The standardization of methods for monitoring, QA, and assessment has made progress mainly through the Wetland Monitoring Workgroup outreach efforts and within organizations already using SWAMP procedures. A workgroup for the ocean ecosystem health theme has yet to be formed; however, recent funding from Resources Legacy Fund and the State Water Board may lead to a joint graduate student fellow to be hired by the Ocean Science Trust and SCCWRP to begin the coordination process between MPA and ASBS monitoring efforts. The triennial audit's conclusion that the current largely-voluntary effort is not sustainable continues to be born out. It appears that progress will be made in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, through actions by state and federal agencies already working to coordinate monitoring, assessment, data management, and visualization; this bodes well for the Estuary Monitoring Workgroup's efforts, at least for its Bay-Delta activities.</p>
<p>Attachment Links:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Senate Bill 2070 (Statutes of 2006) • Memorandum of Understanding between Cal/EPA and CNRA (2007) • Monitoring Council's Initial Recommendations to Agency Secretaries (2008) • 2009 Annual Progress Report • Monitoring Council's Comprehensive Monitoring Program Strategy (2010) • 2011 Annual Progress Report

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2012 Annual Progress Report • First Triennial Audit of Implementing the Monitoring Council's Strategy (2014) 	
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ITEM:	8	Approx. Time:
Title of Topic:	NEXT MEETING AGENDA	10 minutes
Purpose:	<p>Plan agenda for December 11, 2015 Monitoring Council meeting in Sacramento. Potential items include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Data quality and data management standardization efforts of SWAMP (Melissa Morris) b) The California Freshwater Species Database (Jeanette Howard, The Nature Conservancy) c) Assessing aquatic habitat connectivity and low-flow ecological thresholds (Robert Holmes, CDFW Water Branch) d) Story-telling Initiative of the Water Board's Office of Information Management and Analysis (Greg Gearheart) e) Possibility of holding a Monitoring Council annual conference f) Presentations from organizations within the Natural Resources agency (e.g., those identified in SB 1070) and next steps for outreach g) Department of Pesticide Regulation water quality and pesticide use data – possible options to get those data available and integrated onto one of the My Water Quality portals; Management Agency Agreement between DPR and the State Water Board will soon be rewritten (Dawit Tadesse) 	
Desired Outcome:	Develop agenda ideas for the December 11 meeting.	
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ADJOURN

August 11, 2015