

Minutes - California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup
July 15, 2010
SCCWRP, 3535 Harbor Blvd., Suite 110 Costa Mesa, CA 92626

10:00 Welcome and Introductions (Eric Stein)

In Attendance:

Scott Clemmons, DWR ; Eric Gilles, SLC; Chris Solek, SCCWRP; Kevin O'Connor, MLML; Christina Grosso, SFEI; Paul Jones, USEPA; Bill Orme, State Water Board; Cliff Harvey, State Water Board; Josh Collins, SFEI; Cori Ferrar, USACE – LA Dist.; Bryant Chesney, NOAA Fisheries; Jon Marshack, State Water Board – Monitoring Council; Eric Stein, SCCWRP; Tom Cavanaugh, USACE, Sacramento Dist.

Phone attendees: Chad Roberts, Humboldt Bay HRD; Andree Greenberg, SF Bay RWQCB; Melissa Scianni, USEPA; Chris Potter, Natural Resources Agency, CDFG; Susan Monheit, State Water Board/SWAMP.

Announcements:

Craig Wilson has retired from CDFG, but is expected to continue participation in CWMW as a retired annuitant. Pending the resolution of this transition, Eric Stein acted as chair for this meeting.

It was announced that Ross Clark is no longer with the Coastal Commission, and thus no longer assigned to CWMW.. He will continue to work with the Central Coast Team.

Eric Stein announced that the Monitoring Council Co-Chairs have signed a letter to “all major agencies” directing them to incorporate the WRAMP, in cooperation with CWMW, into wetland related projects and activities.

10:05 Review of Meeting Minutes from 5/18/2010 (Eric Stein)

Minutes from previous meeting approved with one correction: Bryant Chesney was listed as a phone participant for the 5/18 meeting. He did not participate in the May meeting.

10:15 Wetland Monitoring Strategy (WRAMP) Implementation

--Outreach to Joint Ventures (Chris Potter)

State of the State's Wetlands Report still under revision; current ETA is late summer. Chris has been doing outreach to SF Bay, Central Valley and Riparian Habitat Joint Ventures. Continued outreach to encourage participation in CWMW is planned.

Action items:

- Chris Potter: Develop outreach strategy that includes powerpoint and fact sheet about Monitoring Council, CWMW, and WRAMP as well as slides on the funding strategy. This will be used to help with discussion with joint ventures and with outreach following signing of the WRAMP memo. Products will ultimately be included on the Portal and the CWMW web site. For discussion at Sept 16 CWMW meeting.

- CWMW: Create a schedule for taking outreach presentation on the road to meet with each agency and discuss how they can participate in WRAMP

**--Off Agenda Discussion prompted by Joint Venture (JV) discussion:
Central Valley Mapping**

Riparian Habitat Joint Venture will be partnering with DWR to map riparian (i.e., streamside vegetation) in Central Valley as part of the Central Valley flood control project; product due in six months. They will be working Chico State and UC Davis using the VegCamp protocols.

Action items:

- Josh Collins and Scott Clemmons: (1) Facilitate transfer riparian mapping tool to Chico State/Davis team to explore if it can be incorporated into the process. (2) Seek agreement for design of future cross-walk of classification systems. (3) Use WRAMP memo to help facilitate inclusion of riparian maps into Portal
- Jon Marshack: Seek place on August 11 Monitoring Council meeting agenda for this topic.

-- Grants Funded/Not Funded (Paul Jones, All)

CEC Arid Stream CRAM Proposal (Chris Solek): The proposed California Energy Commission grant for arid system CRAM was not funded. Cliff suggested that we continue to pursue this through incorporation of WRAMP development and support into mitigation plans for large energy and infrastructure projects proposed under state sponsored plans such as the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

USEPA 104 Wetland Program Grants (Paul Jones): Grants that were funded:

- CRAM update process, for module development, document revisions, and QA/QC improvement.
- Performance curves and riparian mitigation tools
- TAT support
- Sierra Nevada/Tahoe test of CRAM and state wetland monitoring toolkit
- Additional funds to Washoe Tribe will tie in to the Tahoe project

Paul Jones notes that 4 of 18 proposals were funded, and that “the quality all of the proposals was outstanding.”

Other Grant News: Chris Potter reports that CIAP is still under review, and could see some movement in a month or so. A re-allocation of Prop. 84 funds is being directed to WRAMP for grant funded projects, tracker and portal development, and CEDEN development.

Action items:

- Chris Solek and L2 committee: Develop a work plan for arid/episodic stream CRAM that can be used to guide state-planned project mitigation funds to CRAM & WRAMP development by Aug. 30.

- Paul Jones: Report back on potential individual(s) from the Tahoe group that can begin participating on CWMW (next meeting).
- Josh Collins & Eric Stein: Prepare a slide show on overall work plan for Portals & Trackers and how CIAP and SWRCB monies are being used for next CWMW meeting
- Josh Collins, Chris Solek, Paul Jones and Cliff Harvey: Prepare a table that lists priorities for funding, proposals pending, funded projects, who is provided funding, and duration of project; post table to web site (Draft ready for Chris Potter in advance of Aug 11 Monitoring Council Meeting, post on website after CWMW review at next CWMW meeting).
- Chris Potter: Present funding status table (as developed by Josh, Chris, Paul and Cliff above) to Monitoring Council on Aug. 11. This should include all funds from all sources that are currently allocated.

- **Council Memo on WRAMP Implementation (Eric Stein)**

The burden is now on us to follow through with series of next steps, including outreach steps just discussed. Possible agency steps to implement WRAMP were discussed. We were asked to comment on the specific steps they can do, or are doing, to implement WRAMP were discussed:

Goals Proposed (no specific actions or deadlines):

- Create and maintain a list of agency support items for inclusion on web site as part of the wetland strategy document
- Tom Cavanaugh - Facilitate discussion between three Corps Districts in CA Civil Works programs on use of CRAM
- Josh Collins & Eric Stein - Work with agency staff, especially CDFG and Water Board staff to address any remaining issues on riparian elements of CRAM
- All - Develop ideas/suggestions for Wildlife Conservation Board support of WRAMP (e.g., grant funding stream for mapping and monitoring).
- Get mitigation banks into Tracker—coordinate with RIBITS (Corps database)
- Develop a proposal and budget for getting older mitigation projects into Tracker, start with the big projects
- Create a schedule for taking outreach presentation on the road to meet with each agency and discuss how they can participate in WRAMP.
- Specific, directed effort to outreach and partner to Ducks Unlimited, and possibly PRBO.

- **Other Information Items**

-- Coordination with SWAMP(Eric Stein, Susan Monheit)

Susan Monheit, new SWAMP Outreach Coordinator, discussed opportunities for SWAMP coordination with CWMW.

-- State Water Board News – Bill Orme: Instead of development of a wetland policy (the proposed WRAPP), a decision has been made to develop a policy and regulations. Phase 1 of the Policy will cover the wetland definition, wetland delineation. The supporting Phase 1

regulations will focus on dredge and fill issues based on the federal 404(b)(1) mitigation rule. Other Regulations will direct the Water Boards to implement WRAMP.

12:15 Charter Update

Group discussed potential changes to the charter, which is now almost two years old. Changes to the Charter and Roles and Responsibilities documents were approved pertaining to:

- Participation by tribal governments (i.e., tribes with delegated 404 authority), the public and NGOs.
- Encouragement for groups with key data mgmt, wetland management or funding roles to participate with CWMW. (Local and regional interests would have a voice through participation with regional teams)
- Acknowledgement of the State's need for status and trend data
- Communication goals within and outside the workgroup
- Removal of identification of specific products in the charter; replace with "Support implementation of strategies or programs that are developed by the CWMW"
- Encouragement of statewide implementation of WRAMP
- Outreach and public info dissemination via portal
- other minor revisions and clarifications

Action Items

Kevin O'Connor - Compile proposed revisions to charter for presentation to CWMW at next meeting.

2:00 CA Wetland Program Plan Memo (Chris Potter, Paul Jones)

Next steps identified were:

- Articulate overall Statewide goals in general terms, much of this has been written already
- Draft plans should be submitted to EPA by Fall 2011

Action item: (Bill Orme and Chris Potter): Circulate a draft plan in advance of the September CWMW meeting, with CWMW to approve a plan at the December meeting. Plan will include outreach and review strategy. New title to be "Five Year Wetland Work Plan." Chris Potter will be primary point of contact.

2:45 Ecosystem Health Portals Coordination

Bryant Chesney presented an overview of eelgrass monitoring program and relationship to wetlands monitoring programs and the Portal. Group discussion of coordination between estuary, stream and wetland portals.

Action Items:

- Jon Marshack: Notify Monitoring Council that CWMW will adopt the shallow subtidal/eelgrass mapping effort, with understanding that a saltwater or estuary workgroup may form in the future, and if so, this project may migrate to that group. (next MC meeting).
- Jon Marshack: Request Monitoring Council to direct “ecosystem health portals” to coordinate content and links, to minimize artificial separation of types of aquatic features (next MC meeting).
- Cristina Grosso: Produce mockup of an integrated watershed portal or aquatic ecosystem portal (report progress, present draft if possible, next CWMW meeting)

3:45 Level 1 & 2 Committee

Expected outcome: Discuss recent meeting activities and committee issues, including a status update on CIAP funding.

- Level 1 - including update on Status & Trends Project

L1 participant list is updated. CDFG 1600 program is expected to participate in WRAMP, pending contact with new 1600 program manager. Work plan still prioritizes wetland mapping, then classification, except for immediate riparian mapping needs of DWR (see above).

- Level 2 - include update on arid stream work ()

L2 Committee has primarily been working with grant development (see above). New module development is proceeding for: desert riverine; vernal pools, depressional, and small seasonal estuarine. Work continues on work plan and organizational chart for statewide CRAM implementation.

4:15 Updates

- Status of the State of the State Wetland's Report (Craig Wilson)(see C. Potter, above)
- Wetland and Riparian Area Policy (Bill Orme): Focused stakeholder meetings conducted last month, comments under analysis.
- EPA National Wetland Condition Assessment (Paul Jones): NWA is moving along, contract funds are in place, more training to come. All cropped field sites to be dumped from potential sites. All CA sites to be CRAMMED.
- Lyris List Serve (Bill Orme): Lyris is available and in service. Bill and Jon are administrators.
- CWMW Logo (Jon Marshack) in process with State Water Board graphic artists.

4:40 Announcements

Paul Jones: A new rapid assessment has been approved for 2 Corps districts in Texas, but not available to public yet.

Josh Collins: SFEI is doing a full 1-2-3 ambient assessment for Santa Clara Water District's biggest watershed.

Eric Stein – Paul Jones: Doris Vidal at SCCWRP has conducted a gene micro-array for estuary fish, and compared that data with CRAM data; final report to submitted to USEPA. This study provides an example of how CRAM results can show good overall site condition, but that the site can still have water quality problems, thus showing the importance of pairing CRAM with an appropriate L3 assessment.

4:45 Next steps and future agenda items (Eric Stein, Melissa Scianni)

1. Outreach strategy, including a schedule for meetings
 - o Joint Ventures, Ducks Unlimited
2. Review revised Charter and Roles and Responsibilities documents
3. Update on Tahoe group representation
4. Big picture plans for Tracker and Wetland Portal development with new funding
5. Statewide wetland plan review
 - o Table of projects with funding status, duration, etc.
6. Election of co-chairs & possible future co-chairs from State agency

Possible future meeting agenda items:

7. Presentation on Santa Clara Valley L1-2-3 demo project
8. Presentation by Doris Vidal on CRAM and microarray assessment of estuarine contamination

5:00 Adjourn