

California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup
Minutes
August 5, 2014
Cal EPA Building, Room 240, Sacramento

Attendees

In attendance:

Ana Maria Saenz, State Water Board
Alice Low, CDFW
Bill Orme, State Water Board
Brian Dailey, State Water Board
Cliff Harvey, State Water Board
Eric Stein, SCCWRP
Jeanie Mascia, State Water Board
Jon Marshack, State Water Board
Josh Collins, SFEI-ASC
Karina Johnston, SMBRC
Kevin O'Connor, MLML
Kris Jones, DWR
Melissa Scianni, USEPA
Shakoor Azimi-Gaylon, Delta Cons.
Stacy Sherman, CDFW
Tom Cavanaugh, South Pacific Div USACE

By telephone:

Elaine Blok, USFWS NWI
Marisa Van Dyke, CV RWQCB
Paul Jones, USEPA
Rebecca Payne, Caltrans

Meeting Minutes

- Melissa will send out the February minutes to be approved via email. Comments can be sent to Melissa.
- The May meeting minutes have been approved and posted to the CWMW website.
- Next CWMW meeting is November 4, 2014 at the State Water Board.

Adopt Governing Documents

Workgroup Charter and Roles & Responsibility (R&R) Documents

Minor edits to Charter and R&R documents were approved:

- In the charter document a reference to monitoring council adopting WRAMP was added.
- In the first sentences of both the Charter and R&R documents “monitoring and assessment” was added.
- The R&R document was edited to say that, when contacted by the media, a group member should immediately confer with the co-chairs, (i.e., instead of waiting for the next meeting as written in the current R&R document).
- The documents were adopted by the group and the final documents will be posted to CWMW’s web page (*note: documents were posted on August 6, 2014*).

WRAMP Strategic Planning

2014 Priorities

A strategic planning meeting was held on July 22; during this meeting the group outlined five priorities for implementation of WRAMP. Sub-committees were selected to address each of the priorities. (Attached are the Strategic Planning Meeting Notes).

- Rebecca Payne was added to the Institutionalizing WRAMP tools sub-committee.
- Jon Marshack was added to the Outreach subcommittee.
- Goal statements were added to the strategic planning document.
- Each subcommittee should finalize their table created at the strategic planning meeting. These five tables will be combined into a business plan for the council, will be used to structure future agendas, and will be part of the annual report.

ACTION ITEMS:

- CWMW members should review and comment on the goal statements. Send comments to Melissa Scianni.
- Subcommittees will meet before the next CWMW meeting in November, to revise and edit the priority table to which they were assigned, and begin development of the details of the priority tasks. Committees will report to CWMW at the next meeting.
- Each subcommittee shall review the members of their group and identify others who should be involved in the subcommittee.
- Sub-committee tasks for the first meetings: review membership, prioritize and identify action items, determine resources that are already available, develop time frames for action items, and propose success criteria.
- The strategic planning meeting notes will be sent out for final review; members should review the strategic meeting notes and send comments to Melissa Scianni.

Delta Regional Monitoring Program (RMP) Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon and Josh Collins.

Update

- As changes continue in the delta, wetland monitoring will continue but coordinated effort is needed.
- Delta RMP committees are currently focused on developing management questions, such as: What programs, policies, and permits are going to be served by Delta RMP? Will the program be focused on NPDES, or should consider broader concerns? Should the program acquire flow data? Habitat data? What will be the relationship between CWMW and the Delta RMP?
- The Delta RMP is seeking contact with various monitoring groups. There is communication with downstream Bay Regional Monitoring Program. There is a goal to reach out to others, who are already monitoring, to explain the WRAMP approach and the WRAMP tools to see if they may be useful.

- Delta RMP will also need to address data management. Currently data from the delta is not being stored in a centralized location.
- Josh, Shakoora and others are in communication with the Bay Regional Monitoring Program and others to learn how CWMW can help coordinate regional monitoring efforts.

ACITON ITEMS:

- All: Members should continue their outreach efforts in the Delta, and coordinate messages with CWMW when possible.
- Members should contribute success stories for dissemination to other regions.

Level 3 Efforts**Delta Interagency Ecological Program (IEP),****Alice Low, CDFW**

- The Tidal Marsh Monitoring Workgroup is a new workgroup of the IEP to meet data needs of FRPA.
- Alice Lowe of CDFW leads this new IEP workgroup.
- Goals of this group will include: updating conceptual models, development of a standardized monitoring program, lead development of site-specific monitoring plans, making research recommendations, providing guidance and review of research and monitoring proposals, and integrating activities with other programs. A draft plan is expected to be available by the end of 2014.
- DWR will be handling the restoration projects as well as the permitting while the CDFW will lead monitoring efforts. CDFW will monitor for compliance and effectiveness for State Water Project and Central Valley Project biological opinion requirements. (See http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/wetland_workgroup/#meeting).
- Monitoring will include phytoplankton, zooplankton, and fish to evaluate benefits of wetland restoration projects on sensitive fish populations, as per the biological opinion requirements. Other agencies will collect water samples and conduct vegetative sampling, as well as other monitoring.
- The program will include long term monitoring over several years, but there is not an exact time frame. Monitoring will continue long enough to answer some basic questions about fisheries health.
- The program will be broad enough to cover a large variety of wetlands and as part of the protocols, reference sites will be selected in order to determine pre and post monitoring conditions.
- CWMW suggested that data protocols should be addressed at the beginning of the project, rather than the end, so that the data would be compatible with existing data bases. Members also suggested that data analysis methods should be developed along with data collection to clearly link data collection with specific management questions.

ACITON ITEMS:

- Josh and Shakoora will reach out to Alice and her IEP workgroup to explain the WRAMP framework for comprehensive monitoring of aquatic resources and to introduce Alice to the Montezuma Wetlands Project and its monitoring plan.

Santa Monica Bay Restoration AuthorityKarina Johnston, SMBRC

A tidal wetland monitoring framework for Southern California is under development, with a focus on Santa Monica Bay. A goal is to create a framework document that can be used by other restoration projects to plan their monitoring programs, so that data can be shared across projects. The overall framework of the monitoring program follows the L1, L2 and L3 framework.

- Tidal estuarine L3 indicators and protocols for Southern California are under development. Baseline assessment programs were created to assess current conditions and to fill in data gaps. CRAM is used for L2 assessments. Active monitoring with Level Three protocols started in 2011 at the Ballona Wetland Restoration Project.
- The Framework will include multiple protocols for each indicator with cost estimates and recommendations for habitat types where they work best.
- SMBRA requests feedback from CWMW on their framework document leading up to a workshop with their various technical advisory committees.
- CWMW suggestions:
 - Framework should have users identify management questions and reporting needs before choosing monitoring protocols.
 - Framework should consider how to analyze data across indicators and projects.
 - Framework should define the analysis methods to be used as early in the process as possible.
 - Responsibility should be assigned for integration of data across indicators and projects to report on overall health of a system.

ACITON ITEMS:

- Outreach Committee: Wetlands portal should have links to monitoring efforts going on around the state with contact information as well as monitoring assessment methods, data management protocols with the goal to become the place on the web to find wetland information. Add this update to the Portal as an explicit bullet point on the Outreach committee's work plan.
- Melissa Scianni/Ana Maria Saenz: Invite SMBRA to return to the CWMW with an update when the framework document has been drafted.

Updates

- Status and Trends (S&T), Classification, and Mapping Implementation (Eric Stein): SCCWRP and SFEI have developed an S&T/CARI classification cross-walk. S&T classification categories were revised to better align with CRAM and CARI (e.g. addition of vernal pool complex), which also resulted in a simplification of the S&T classification system. It is expected that this simplification will result in decreased error in S&T maps and decreased cost for the program. S&T is now in pilot implementation phase (mapping 110 plots at 2005 and 2010 time points). A regional intensification demonstration project with CVJV is in progress. It is expected the S&T SOP and CARI SOP should become CWMW documents, when approved by CWMW. Need for an L1 Committee was discussed.
 - ACTION ITEM: (Eric Stein): Deliver presentation on S&T at the February, 2015 meeting of the Monitoring Council.
- L2 Committee (Cliff Harvey): See attached L2 quarterly report.
- Caltrans contract with SFEI: Caltrans is conferring with SFEI on various WRAMP and CRAM related research proposals. CWMW and L2 will be consulted regarding the each of these tasks.
 - Testing the effects of depressional wetland size on CRAM scores and recommending depressional wetland designs to compensate for size if warranted
 - Recommending a Stressor Index for CRAM based on USA RAM to replace the Stressor Checklist of CRAM
 - Develop a Performance Curve for depressional wetlands
 - Explore the relationship between stress, condition and buffer (assessing the evidence that buffers moderate effects of stress) based on similar analyses being done for USA RAM
 - Explore ways to develop CDFs for local watersheds based on existing CRAM data
 - CRAM training for Caltrans personnel
- 104(b)(3) Grants Awarded:
 - State Water Resources Control Board: A project to study regulatory uses of CRAM, and a staff report on information gathered from pilot studies for the Wetland Policy Phase 2 proposed wetland water quality standards done with the North Coast, San Francisco Bay, Central Coast and Lahontan Regional Boards.
 - State Parks: A project to create standardized monitoring for bar built estuaries in State Parks, and to support further development of statewide estuary monitoring and assessment methods.
 - Delta Conservancy: A project for visualizing and sharing intensive data assessments. The Conservancy will conduct outreach to recommend data sources for EcoAtlas.

- Coastal Conservancy: A project to develop a regional wetland restoration strategy and an In-Lieu Fee mitigation program for the Southern California coast based on the process used to set wetland habitat goals for the San Francisco Bay area.
- SFEI: A project to create a Tahoe EcoAtlas to track restoration and mitigation projects in the Tahoe Basin.
- Various Tribes: Several smaller grants.

Announcements:

- Healthy Streams Partnership, next meeting August 15, 2014
- Monitoring Council, next meeting September 9, 2014. An agenda and report will be sent out on August 22, 2014.
- The Bay-Delta Science Conference will be held October 28-30, 2014 at the Sacramento Convention Center. The Wetland Portal Poster has just been accepted to present at the Science Conference. <http://scienceconf2014.deltacouncil.ca.gov/>
- Elaine Blok (USFWS/NWI) Reports 148 7.5' quads (with 50 more coming soon) of California desert NWI maps and an additional 18 NWI maps covering Eel River to Humboldt on the North Coast of California were submitted to the National Wetlands Inventory NSST office for submission into the Wetlands Mapper. The maps will be available on the next update of the Mapper at the end of September. The wetlands mapper is found at <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>

Potential Topics for Future Meetings

Reference Network- Fact Sheet, use in setting performance standards
 Update on Corps SOPs
 EcoAtlas Training Video
 Report back on S&T funding
 Delta Restoration Commission WRAMP (Delta RMP)
 Report out from strategic planning committees
 Annual Report from Council
 Southern California T-sheet project
 NWI use of CARI maps
 Performance Curves for streams and tidal marsh restoration projects

Next Meeting: Performance curves for riparian and estuarine wetlands, report out from strategic planning subcommittees, and annual report to Council.

2014 CWMW Meeting Dates

Nov 4, 2014
 State Water Resources Control Board