

QUARTERLY REPORT
California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup
L2 - Rapid Assessments Committee
February 2, 2016

The Level 2 Committee of the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup provides this report to CWMW for the quarter ending February 2, 2016. Thank you to Cara Clark and Sara Pearce for assistance in compiling this report.

2016 Calendar

L2 meetings for the remainder of 2016 are scheduled for April 8, July 22, and October 14. All meetings to be convened at 10:00 a.m. at the SFEI offices in Richmond.

Announcements:

Water and Fire: Impacts of Climate Change: L2 member, Dr. Michelle Stevens of CSU Sacramento has announced a 2-day conference “Water and Fire: Impacts of Climate Change,” sponsored by the Institute on Science for Global Policy, to be held at Sac State on April 10-11 (Sunday-Monday). Contact Michelle for more information at stevensm@csus.edu

New Member: Mr. John Mack, who was instrumental in the development of Ohio Rapid Assessment Method and helped conceive CRAM at Newport Bay way back in 2003, is our newest L2 member. He is now residing in Southern California and is engaged in work with the Catalina Island Conservancy. He says he would like to get back into wetlands, and get the Catalina wetlands on the map. We look forward to benefitting from his experience and advice, and perhaps working with him on Catalina.

Module Development – Episodic Stream Module: An Episodic Stream Module has been developed, primarily through SCCWRP, with substantial assistance from Moss Landing Marine Labs/Central Coast Wetlands Group. The L2 committee and others have reviewed this module, and Eric Stein has responded to those comments. A final version of the module, reflecting those comments, is presented to CWMW today.

The L2 committee recommends that CWMW adopt and endorse this module, and that it be made available for use by all trained practitioners.

Interested L2 members and CRAM trainers will be developing training materials and events soon, and will report to CWMW on those opportunities at the next quarterly meeting.

L2 recommends that this module be subject to the same developmental process as that applied to all other modules in current development or use. SCCWRP will be providing additional details on the development and testing process to date. Additional testing and validation studies are needed to fully support this module, especially as pertains to application of the module to a wider geographic area, and development of an e-CRAM module. Study designs and funding requests will follow.

The L2 Committee thanks Eric Stein, SCCWRP and all who participated in the development of this important module.

Ongoing Research and Other Module Development Updates

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- Vernal Pool module validation field work will proceed this spring. Sites at Fort Ord and other central coast chaparral locations are to be included if possible.
- SFEI has presented a promising “draft” of a stressor index to L2 for discussion, and continues to work on refinement of the method.

Follow-up from Last Quarter:

Riparian Assessment Workshop Proposal: Ross Clark and Kevin O’Connor will be participating on a steering committee led by Stefan Lorenzato (Department of Water Resources, Riparian Joint Venture) to development a proposed Riparian Workshop. Any CWMW members interested in assisting with this steering committee should contact L2.

Practitioner Guidelines Update/Clarification: A draft refinement of practitioner and trainer guidelines continues to be reviewed by L2. Delivery to CWMW is delayed until the next quarter.

Board of Forestry - Forestland Ecological Performance Measures Development: No new activity.

State Water Board CRAM Survey: Brian Dailey of the State Water Board’s Division of Water Quality - 401 Certification and Wetlands Unit continues to prepare for a survey of CRAM “clients,” and potential clients. The survey is underway with testing of select respondents before wider distribution. L2 will continue to collaborate with Brian to ensure that the technical and scientific basis of CRAM is accurately represented in the survey.

CRAM and Bioassessment

Concern has been raised that inclusion of CRAM assessment as part of the California Perennial Streams Assessment (PSA) program may be discontinued. L2 will be engaging in discussion with SWAMP and CDFW to help find out if this change is actually happening and – if so – to ask, “Is dropping CRAM the right decision.”

Kevin O’Connor has compiled some basic analysis from this data, to help demonstrate the utility and capability of CRAM in relation to the PSA data, and will present that analysis at today’s meeting.