



California Wetland Monitoring  
Workgroup  
(CMMW)  
Meeting Minutes  
9:30 – 4:00  
May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017  
State Water Resources Control  
Board  
1001 I Street  
Sacramento, Ca 95814



## In Attendance

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Jennifer Siu, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Josh Collins, San Francisco Estuary Institute  
Jon Marshack, Monitoring Council  
Tony Hale, San Francisco Estuary Institute  
Tom Cavanaugh, U.S. Army Corps  
Tatyana Isupov, State Water Board  
Chris Jones, Monitoring Council  
Brendan Reed, State Water Board  
Rebecca Fris, Department of Fish and Wildlife

Melissa Scianni, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Cristina Grosso, San Francisco Estuary Institute  
Cliff Harvey, State Water Board  
Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon, Delta Conservancy  
Megan Fitzgerald, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Chris Potter, California Natural Resources Agency  
Ross Clark, Central Coast Wetlands Group  
Megan Cooper, State Coastal Conservancy

## Review of Meeting Minutes

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Melissa Scianni will send minutes with the next meeting agenda and request approval by email.

## Special Recognition for Jon Marshack

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Jon Marshack received special recognition for his dedicated career in water quality, and his service with CMMW and the Water Quality Monitoring Council. A treat was provided by staff for all in celebration.

## Open and Transparent Water Data Act (AB 1755)

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Tony Hale of the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) shared updates from the April 14<sup>th</sup> Data Management Steering Committee meeting. Methods to best manage data using existing tools while also satisfying Proposition 1 requirements and open data principles as per the Water Data Act were the focus of the meeting discussion. The Committee reviewed the leadership structure, charter, and implementation steps necessary to effectively meet these data management objectives. They also discussed progress to date, agency involvement, and how to best move forward.

The California Aquatic Resource Inventory (CARI) is not currently represented in federal surface water maps. CWMW will need to work with US Geologic Survey (USGS) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for CARI inclusion in the National Wetlands Index (NWI) and National Hydrography Dataset (NHD). This task would best be addressed by the formation of a CWMW Level 1 subcommittee. Greg Smith, Department of Water Resources (DWR) and a California NHD steward, will be invited to the next CWMW meeting to discuss CARI inclusion in NHD. Josh Collins of SFEI stressed the importance of working with a state steward to facilitate this task.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Invite Greg Smith to the next CWMW meeting to discuss CARI inclusion in NHD and his interest in participating on the formation of a Level (1) subcommittee.

## CWMW Use Case

CWMW has developed a “Use Case” model outlining the steps to integrate data related to mitigation planning in accordance with Water Data Act. The WRAMP (Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Plan) Use Case may be expanded to broadly cover wetland monitoring. This workshop provided more guidance on data system development to fulfill Water Data Act requirements. An ongoing challenge is limited funding for any agencies involved with Water Data Act implementation.

The CWMW Use Case included water quality data as part of the dataset. Because the focal point of the Water Data Act is to better inform water supply, CWMW will focus on how water quality and ecological data can inform water supply concerns.

See attached Use Case document.

## EcoAtlas Business Plan

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The EcoAtlas Business Plan is currently under CWMW review and for later review by the California Water Quality Monitoring Council (CWQMC). Tony Hale discussed the Plan in detail and opened the discussion to questions and suggestions. Suggestions included:

- The need to more clearly identify other state funding contributions to EcoAtlas support and development.
- A discussion on the title referring only to EcoAtlas, when this platform supports other related efforts such as CRAM, L2, QAQC, and others. EcoAtlas is an effective branding metonym, however, a graphic or visual aid to better articulate the relationship of EcoAtlas to WRAMP should be included.
- To consider adding a high-level discussion on how the EcoAtlas toolset can be used to make decisions. This could include Josh’s WRAMP pipe diagram and appropriate discussion regarding the use of WRAMP as an adaptive management framework.
- The need to include an appendix that explains the cost of different aspects of the toolset and the cost associated with certain requested changes.

The Data Management Workgroup Steering Committee will provide input to further guide the funding discussion. In addition, CWMW members met with Greg Gearheart and others to clarify state agency funding constraints. The Plan will continue to be revised, with input from the Steering Committee and CWQMC. Their input will inform CWMW in writing a more exact funding plan. Outcome scenarios have been drafted to facilitate these discussions. Consultants, also subject to data sharing under the Water Data Act are important

data producers to include in these EcoAtlas discussions. Please see the presentation, EcoAtlas Business Plan: Next Steps for Implementation

**ACTION ITEMS:** Send comments on the EcoAtlas Business Plan to Tony by mid-May. Shakoora will set up the June meeting with key people within the State to discuss the funding model. Tony will put discussion of the Business Plan on the Data Management Workgroup Steering Committee July meeting. SFEI will reach out to the Water Foundation for funding models.

## Water Quality Council Retrospective

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The Water Quality Council held a meeting May 23<sup>rd</sup> in Sacramento. The meeting focused on the Council achievements and current goals. The meeting was followed by a strategy discussion on the costs to maintain the Council, workgroup efforts/initiatives, and perspectives from invited speakers.

## Level 2 Committee

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This year's CDFW Perennial Stream Bioassessments will be completed in tandem with CRAM assessments. Cliff Harvey (State Board), Glen Sibbald (CDFW) and Chuck Strickland (North Coast Regional Board) conducted a CRAM training for the CDFW field crew and other State employees. The L2 team is working on example case studies and scenarios for using CRAM data to meet specific agency needs and protocols. The annual CRAM training event, CRAM-a-ganza, was held in South Lake Tahoe on June 1 and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Additionally, Cliff is working with CDFW Proposition 1 staff on CRAM collaboration and grant proposals.

Additional discussion on adding an "active status" note to listed CRAM trainers to differentiate those who have not been engaged in recent trainings from those who are actively engaged. Several parameters were discussed to denote "inactive" status: those that have not been keeping up on the collaborative training sessions, involved in L2, attended CRAM-a-ganza training, etc. It was also suggested to list the date of last training attended, rather than basing status on an active/inactive binary. Trainers reaching inactivity should be contacted via email or mail communicating a soon-to-be expired status and how to be re-trained.

**ACTION ITEMS:** L2 committee will have ready at the next CWMW quarterly meeting a proposal for an operational definition of trainer status. It will address what defines an active status and how to regain an active status

## Level 3 Committee Update

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Shakoora provided updates on the Level 3 (L3) Committee's work. The L3 committee was established in 2014 to create a data collection strategy. This involved collaborating with researchers on L3 activity and identifying L3 indicators for CRAM. The committee is currently engaging with stakeholders involved in L3 data collection, developing QA/QC standards and working to identify standardized L3 tools for each wetland class. Moving forward, the Committee is considering how to best develop the process for identifying standardized methods; if groups should draft their own plans for L3 approval, or go through a prescribed process.

The discussion was opened for suggestions regarding future L3 priorities. Suggestions included:

- To focus on a specific wetland type.
- Identify what type of monitoring is most useful for a landscape level approach.
- Provide clear guidelines of minimum requirements for monitoring (e.g. percent plant cover) and methods for data collection.
- Draft a perennial stream assessment protocol.

## Wetland Development Plan

Christina Grosso is reaching out to EcoAtlas users to find out what information is needed in the EcoAtlas Summaries dashboard. Under the “Summaries” tab, there will be various views and their descriptions. Each will have a map interface, bar graph, funding sources and project distribution. It should be noted that a “0” entry under funding by region indicates a lack of data, not the absence of funding. Summaries can be filtered by Regional Board, congressional district, and hydrologic regions (HUC 12 currently). If there is a need for other regional summaries, they can be added to further customize reporting, such as a state-level summary to be used for the State of the State’s wetlands report.

Please refer to the attached complete presentation for additional information on the Wetland Development Plan and for Performance Measure Reporting.

## Delta Conservancy Performance Measure Reporting Grant

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We received an update on the EPA Wetland Grant to the Delta Conservancy to integrate project data and performance measures from EcoAtlas and DeltaView. DeltaView is the data management system used to improve accountability and track progress on Delta Conservancy projects. SFEI and Delta Conservancy have done a lot of outreach to EcoAtlas and Project Tracker users to find out what summaries are most helpful to current users. The grant also covers developing new capabilities to improve reporting for Proposition 1 grants. It will continue to function independently of EcoAtlas, as the goal is to have the two systems crosswalk rather than functionally integrate. A challenge of the project is ensuring uniform reporting. The next steps are actually integrating this project data and determining what information is needed to enhance usability, tracking metrics and reporting features.

## Updates

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### *Ocean Protection Council Outreach*

The Ocean Protection Council (OPC) just adopted a new resolution incorporating new science on sea-level rise and its effect on the California coastline. SFEI and NOAA are trying to provide a cost estimate for tide gauges and regional data centers to better measure and plan for the effects of high tides on marshes.

### *State Board CRAM Survey Results*

Brendan Reed shared preliminary results of the CRAM survey. There was a 29% response rate, with 397 responses. The general takeaway was that agencies support CRAM methodology, but rarely require it. Most respondents thought training for regulatory purposes would be beneficial and should better aid agencies in incorporating CRAM in the permitting and monitoring process. The draft report will be ready for review by the end of this summer.

## Announcements

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- 2017 Proposition 1 solicitation for CDFW is out for review (Rebecca Fris)
- Josh Collins shared a recent interest in using EcoAtlas by mosquito abatement districts/vector control programs.
- Christina Grosso will be co-presenting at the Headwaters to Ocean (H2O) Conference in Irvine, May 22-24, 2017.

## Future Agenda Items

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- EcoAtlas business plan (Josh/Tony)
- WRAMP training approach (Josh/Kevin)
- Delta CARI (Josh)
- State of the State's Wetlands Report (Chris)
- CRAM Survey Results (Brendan)
- Technical Bulletin Update (Melissa/Cliff)
- Bay Area RMP/Permitting Program Update (Josh/Jen/Melissa)
- L1 Committee formulation (Hilde, Josh)
- CRAM module validation (Kevin/Sarah/Cara)