



**Quarterly Report
Level 2 - Rapid Assessments Committee
November 7, 2017
(2018 meeting dates TBA)**

The Level 2 Assessments Committee (L2) of the California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup (CWMW) provides this report for attachment to the November 7, 2018 CWMW meeting minutes.

Request for CWMW Concurrence and Decision:

As noted in the previous quarterly report, L2 requested that CWMW remove the term "Draft" from the CRAM QA Plan posted at Cramwetlands.org, and declare that this plan is now "Final." Action on this item was not recorded in the August, 2017 CWMW minutes. The L2 requests that this decision be formally recorded at the November 7 meeting and minutes.

Technical Bulletin Update

The L2 has continued to observe the initial steps being taken to issue a revised Technical Bulletin, *Using CRAM to Assess Wetland Projects as an Element of Regulatory and Management Programs*, and will be providing comments to Kevin O'Connor who will serve as lead for this important project. Kevin will provide an update to CWMW at the November meeting.

CRAM Module Validation Updates

CWMW will receive a report on recent module validation work at the November 7 meeting.

Slope: A presentation on Slope Module validation was delivered to the CWMW at the August, 2017 meeting by Sarah Pearce and Cara Clark. The Level 2 Committee requests that the CWMW endorse the validation study, approve the Slope Module Version 6.2 as being formally validated.

The Level 2 Committee approves and endorses this validation work and the proposed revisions to the module, which will be presented to CWMW for approval at the November, 2017 meeting, as being formally validated, and that we represent the module as such at www.cramwetlands.org.

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Depressional: The Level 2 Committee requests, based on the presentations at the last meeting delivered by Cara Clark, that the CWMW endorse the validation study, approve the Depressional Module as being formally validated, and that we represent the module as such at www.cramwetlands.org.

Vernal Pools: Cara Clark (MLML) presented results of recent validation work conducted for the vernal pool module. As reported previously, validation was conducted using vegetation and invertebrate data. Statistically significant correlation was found between the CRAM and level 3 data.

Tests comparing 3 pool replicates vs. 6 pool replicates found that differences in scoring outcomes were statistically insignificant. Thus a revision to the method may be possible that would reduce the effort needed for a valid assessment.

Modifications to the Pool and Swale Density metric were also tested and are proposed for the revised module.

The new Vernal Pool field book version 6.2 incorporates these and other refinements.

The Level 2 Committee approves and endorses these revisions as presented. A final report for this validation work is expected soon.

For all modules: The L2 notes that funding for continued validation studies would also be beneficial; e.g. investigation of physical parameters such as soil carbon and other non-vegetation biological parameters, and replication of a greater number of sites in all regions tested.

Recent Conference Presentations

Riparian Summit: On day one of the 2017 Riparian Summit, October 17, at UC Davis, CRAM Trainer Lindsay Teunis presented a session on *Use of Hydrogeomorphic Assessment Method (HGM) and the California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM) in Guiding Adaptive Management Decisions: The Story of the City of Laguna Niguel and the Journey to Revitalizing Sulphur Creek* (abstract at: <https://ripariansummit.ucdavis.edu/individual-presentations/use-hydrogeomorphic-assessment-method-hgm-and-california-rapid-assessment>)

Also on day one, Sarah Pearce presented a session on *Using the California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM) to Quantify Riverine Riparian Condition in Santa Clara County Watersheds* (<https://ripariansummit.ucdavis.edu/individual-presentations/using-california-rapid-assessment-method-cram-quantify-riverine-riparian>).

On day two, Dr. Chad Roberts presented a case study session on an ambient CRAM study of the Laguna de Santa Rosa (Sonoma County) that was conducted in cooperation with RWQCB 1 and SFEI in 2013 (details not yet posted on conference web site).

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Although not directly related to the work of L2, we also note that Dr. Michelle Stevens, an active L2 member, presented a session on *Advancing Riparian and River Restoration in a Time of Uncertainty: Natural Disturbances and Human Induced Stressors Including Drought, Climate Change, Bore Beetle, Fire at the Riparian Summit*.

(<https://ripariansummit.ucdavis.edu/individual-presentations/advancing-riparian-and-river-restoration-time-uncertainty-natural>).

California Aquatic Bioassessment Workgroup (CABW): Sarah Pearce and Cara Clark were invited to present the validation work discussed above in the first day of the 2017 California Aquatic Bioassessment Workgroup annual meeting, October 24-25, at UC Davis. To lead into Cara's presentation on the validation work, Sarah provided an overview of CRAM. Cliff Harvey followed Cara with a brief review of the status of regulatory use of CRAM. The workshop agenda is posted at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/swamp/bioassessment/docs/2017_cabw-fnl_agenda.pdf

All these presentations were well received, and were a successful outreach opportunity for CRAM and CWMW.

Lag time for e-CRAM development

The Level 2 Committee shares CWMW's concern that our ability to fund e-CRAM development has lagged behind development of new and revised modules. The question is: Shall we release new or revised modules that are unsupported by e-CRAM, or shall we withhold release of new or revised modules until e-CRAM for those modules is operational?

The Level 2 Committee agrees that although neither option is desirable, a decision is necessary.

Therefore, L2 recommends that new modules be made available for general use even when e-CRAM support is not yet available. The L2 also recommends that when those circumstances arise, a statement should be provided informing practitioners that CWMW recognizes the need and will be working to fill that need as soon as funding can be obtained. Practitioners should also be notified when funding is obtained, and be given periodic updates.

Training Update:

A conference call to initiate scheduling for 2018 CRAM training is to take place in December. A tentative training schedule should be available by the February, 2018 CWMW meeting.

Two journey level trainers have completed all requirements to become fully qualified CRAM trainers, and have been approved by L2:

1. Stephanie Freed (Associate Regulatory Permitting Specialist with WRA), sponsored by Sarah Pearce and
2. Linnea Spears-Lebrun (ICF), sponsored by Lindsay Teunis (ICF). The L2 committee welcomes these new trainers and looks forward to working with them.

