

**MONTEZUMA WETLANDS PROJECT  
TECHNICAL REVIEW TEAM (TRT)**

**“Kickoff Meeting” MINUTES**

**November 19, 2002  
Birds Landing Hunting Reserve Clubhouse  
9am – 3pm**

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Facilitator:

Paul Jones

Attendees:

Bob Batha, Rachel Bonnefil, Andree Breaux, Josh Collins, Joe Didonato, Cristina Grosso, Bruce Herbold, Roger Leventhal, Doug Lipton, Karl Malamud-Roam, Michelle Orr, Eric Polson, Howard Shellhammer, and Bruce Thompson

Members unable to attend: Dick Arnold, Peter Baye, Jay Davis, Ben Greenfield, Larry Stromberg, John Takekawa, and Donald Yee

Documents distributed:

(1) Restoration Plan,  
(2) updated TRT roster list, and  
(3) Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Plan (MMRP), excluding the appendices (relevant portions of the appendices were distributed according to members' areas of expertise).

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**Field trip to Montezuma Project Site** – The meeting began with a brief overview of the project and a visit to the DWR Day Use Area, Phase I cell construction, and the rehandling facility and make-up water pond adjacent to the wharf.

**Introductions and Purpose of Meeting** – After brief introductions by members, Paul Jones stated the purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project to TRT members, summarize membership objectives and the role of the TRT, and review the communication ground rules. The risk to TRT members being asked to participate in any litigation was discussed; the overall opinion of the group was that there was not a high risk to individual members.

**TRT Overview** – Josh Collins provided an overview of the TRT's goals, objectives, scope of work, membership, and communication procedures. Highlights from this session included:

*Goals, Objectives, Scope of Work:*

- ?? The main goal of the TRT is to serve as an advisory body to the project and agencies, and to provide scientific review on the overall project's monitoring effort.
- ?? The first annual report will be published in June 2003. The TRT will meet as a group to discuss the best way to synthesize the data from the individual reports into an Executive Summary. In addition, all of the unabridged individual team member comments will be included in the report.
- ?? The handling of non-consensus opinions was discussed. Members agreed that an official policy (beyond what is already in the Charter) was not needed at this time and that this issue would be dealt with as needed.

- ?? In *Table 3: Expected Average Hours of Work For a TRT Member During FY 2002 and FY 2003*, two meetings (Kick-off and Post-construction) are scheduled for November 2002. However, both of these meetings were combined in the November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- ?? Josh Collins suggested an evaluation component needs to also be included in the TRT process, however, the specifics will be determined at a later date.

*Membership:*

- ?? Agency members contribute not only their scientific expertise, but also serve an informal liaison role with decision-making bodies.
- ?? (**Action Item**) If an area of expertise is identified as missing from the TRT, additional members can be added. The TRT will assist in the selection of future members. Adding a soil scientist and geotechnical engineer was suggested.

*Communication Procedures:*

- ?? All TRT members should be included on emails regarding technical matters since it could generate other discussions.
- ?? Due to the confidentiality of data results before being released in an official report, TRT members should not talk with the press without approval from the Project Representatives.
- ?? Due to the long-term nature of this project and the infrequency of TRT meetings, it was suggested that an official website would be very useful for the project to include such items as an email list of TRT members, performance criteria for the mitigation measures, TRT assignment schedules, and data results.
- ?? (**Action Item**) On page 6 of the TRT Charter Agreement, ground rule 7.0C, which pertains to discussing the project with colleagues or associates outside of the TRT, was addressed. It was agreed that the Charter Agreement would be revised to allow informal discussions with colleagues.

**Montezuma Wetlands Project** - Doug Lipton distributed copies of the MMRP and explained *Table 5: Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Requirements*, which outlines the performance criteria and contingency measures for each mitigation measure. Highlights from this session included:

*Distribution of Data for Review:*

- ?? If TRT members need any historical data or background information, Doug Lipton or Rachel Bonnefil should be contacted. Direct communication among Doug, Rachel, and the TRT members is encouraged, however, SFEI should also be included in any communications regarding modifications.
- ?? (**Action Item**) To facilitate the review process, when data results are distributed to TRT members, a cover letter should also be included describing the relevant performance criteria, the appropriate line items from Table 5, and clarification on any aspects of the criteria that may have changed during the permit process. Once monitoring results are generated, a standard method for transferring data to the members will also need to be established.

*Documentation:*

- ?? (**Action Item**) In order to inform the agencies and future TRT members, the group strongly emphasized documenting any clarifications (explanation of certain aspects of the performance criteria, monitoring design, etc.) and modifications (changes requiring agency approval) made to the project design and resolutions of questions/issues. However, before a change is implemented, the entire TRT must be notified to avoid any

unexpected consequences. The annual report will also serve as an official record of changes, including why and when changes were implemented.

- ?? (**Action Item**) Each member should keep a record of all communications, since they may be asked to submit this information to SFEI each year.

#### **TRT Tasks for Coming Year** - Individual assignments for TRT members were discussed.

Highlights from this session included:

##### *Table 1: Montezuma Wetland Project TRT Assignments 2002-03:*

- ?? (**Action Item**) The group agreed that it would be very useful if Table 1 could also include the line items from Table 5 of the MMRP and relevant secondary data sets that should be sent in addition to the data results for each monitoring activity/task.
- ?? (**Action Item**) The group reviewed Table 1 and made adjustments to member assignments and monitoring activities/tasks. The physical monitoring subteam (K. Malamud-Roam, M. Orr, and E. Polson) will meet separately and determine the appropriate assignments for monitoring activities listed on page 1 of the table. A revised Table 1 will be distributed to TRT members for additional comments.
- ?? (**Action Item**) After reviewing Table 1, members should contact Josh Collins with their estimated time requirements so contracts can be developed for those members who require one. For logistical reasons, leads will need to be identified for subteams; additional time requirements for participating as a lead should be included in these time estimates. Doug Lipton stressed that the overall budget for SFEI to administer this TRT cannot be exceeded at this time.
- ?? (**Action Item**) While the establishing of subteams (e.g., physical monitoring) will evolve over time, a mechanism should be developed at a later date.

##### *Review of Performance Critieria:*

- ?? (**Action Item**) Members were asked to review Table 5 of the MMRP for their area of expertise and make recommendations for clarifications, modifications, and/or additions to the performance criteria. Doug Lipton will compile the recommendations, respond to comments and provide background rationale for criteria, and distribute results to all TRT members. To focus this review process, it was suggested to avoid recommending additional goals and to review the criteria as realistic, unrealistic, irrelevant to meeting the objective, or missing a critical piece of information. Any persisting recommendations will be included in the annual report.

##### *Format of Data Reviews:*

- ?? The format for the written review of data results was discussed. Reviews should be short and concise (one page report or email) and address the quality of the data, the quality of the methods and their ability to meet the performance criteria, assessment in regards to the identified performance criteria, a brief statement on the meaning of the data, and if applicable, how the data compare to other data results and any additional research ideas.

##### *Additional Research Efforts:*

- ?? Many members had suggestions for additional monitoring efforts. However, due to the long permit approval process and existing permit conditions, Doug Lipton explained that significant changes to the monitoring design are unlikely to occur in the project's first year of operation. However, the Project Representatives encourage suggestions for improving the monitoring design and for additional external research efforts. Research efforts undertaken at the Montezuma site will need to be approved by Jim Levine.
- ?? Since the Montezuma Wetlands Project provides a rare research opportunity, the role of the TRT as a research gatekeeper, with members generating and/or reviewing research

ideas, was briefly discussed. It was decided to address this issue on a case-by-case basis and that the protocols for research opportunities should be reviewed for similar groups (e.g., National Estuarine Research Reserve and Romberg Tiburon Center).