



Bay RMP Steering Committee Meeting

April 27, 2022

San Francisco Estuary Institute

Meeting Summary

Attendees

SC Member	Affiliation	Representing	Present
Eric Dunlavey	City of San Jose	POTW-Large	Y
Amanda Roa	Delta Diablo	POTW-Small	Y
Karin North**	City of Palo Alto	POTW-Medium	Y
Adam Olivieri	BASMAA / EOA, Inc.	Stormwater	Y
<i>Chris Sommers</i>	<i>BASMAA / EOA, Inc.</i>	<i>Stormwater</i>	<i>Y</i>
John Coleman	Bay Planning Coalition	Dredgers	Y
Tessa Beach	US Army Corps of Engineers	USACE	Y
Tom Mumley*	SF Bay Regional WQCB	Water Board	Y
Maureen Dunn	Chevron	Refineries	Y

* Chair, ** Vice Chair, alternates in gray and italicized

Staff and Others:

- Melissa Foley, SFEI
- Jay Davis, SFEI
- Martin Trinh, SFEI
- Luisa Valiela, EPA
- Patrick Walsh, SFEI

1. Introductions and Review Goals for the Meeting

Tom Mumley began the meeting with a brief round of introductions and then reviewed the day's agenda. Key agenda items included a discussion about the upcoming Water Quality Improvement Fund opportunity, the ongoing RMP workgroup season, and planning for communication items. Upcoming meetings were highlighted. John Coleman invited Steering Committee (SC) members to join the Bay Planning Coalition Spring Summit. BACWA will be having an in-person meeting at the David Brower Center on May 5th.

2. Decision: Approve Meeting Summary from January 26, 2022, and Confirm Dates for Future Meetings

Tom Mumley asked the group for any final comments on the previous meeting's summary. Receiving no comments, he moved on to confirm the dates for upcoming meetings. The RMP SC meeting was confirmed for July 20, 2022; John Coleman and Tessa Beach will find alternates to stand in for them in the case they cannot attend.

The RMP Annual Meeting was rescheduled from October 13, 2022, to October 5, 2022. Melissa Foley confirmed the David Brower Center was available and that SFEI has a hold on that date. Following the Annual Meeting, the October Multi-Year Planning Workshop and SC meeting were confirmed for October 26, 2022.

Decision:

- Adam Oliveri motioned to approve the January meeting summary. Eric Dunlavey seconded the motion and the motion was carried by all present members.

3. Information: TRC Meeting Summary

Melissa provided the SC with a summary of the previous month's TRC meeting, beginning with an update on the data services team.

Adam Wong gave an update on the work of the Data Services team in 2022, highlighting personnel changes as well as ongoing COVID delays. He provided a quick overview of the finalized datasets for the year as well as database maintenance and process improvement efforts. The main challenge Adam noted was pandemic-related delays, either related to sampling and analysis or staff workload. The RMP is also working with "new labs," including Eurofins and academic labs who often have new staff. Data management improvements for 2022 focus on expanding staff capabilities for QA/QC, whether by training additional staff to handle QA/QC or streamlining the QA/QC process. Michael Weaver's return to Bay RMP work, after previously focusing on Delta RMP work, will help alleviate the workload as the team moves through the QA backlog. The CEC data review is more expensive than legacy contaminants due

to state requirements for adding new analytes into CEDEN, which is proving to be an onerous process. Regarding this, Tom Mumley emphasized the need to communicate this increased cost to the State Board staff who make decisions about CEDEN. He stressed the importance of identifying non-regulatory methods that still provide information. This is a service that must be paid for, even if that is SFEI. The RMP is not currently funded to do this, but it would be greatly beneficial if service funds could be obtained. This could help generate emerging contaminant data from different media.

Don Yee of SFEI previewed the 2020 North Bay Margins Sediment results. The North Bay study was the last in the series of margins pilot studies, with Central Bay completed in 2015 and South Bay in 2017. The objectives of the study were to assess contaminant concentrations in the margins and determine whether those levels are of concern and if they are different from concentrations measured in the open Bay. North Bay margins had lower concentrations for most contaminants than other areas of the Bay. The North Bay had less highly contaminated margins areas compared to the Central Bay. The revised S&T design calls for monitoring in the margins in five-year intervals for CECs and every 10 years for all pollutants. A draft report for internal review will be published in July. A final report will be released and presented in September.

Melissa Foley informed the TRC of a method change for PCBs, PBDEs, and pesticide analysis in bird eggs at SGS AXYS. High Resolution Mass Spectroscopy (HRMS) instrumentation is being phased out due to the cessation of instrument support and software development for this method. HRMS is being replaced by gas chromatograph mass spec/mass spec (GC MS/MS). The suggested intercomparison will compare methods for PCBs and legacy pesticides, with samples costing \$900 and \$800, respectively, with an approximate cost of \$1780 per sample, totaling \$16k. SGS AXYS is interested in publishing this comparison data in partnership with the RMP. PBDEs will continue to use the HRMS method as this is the final year of their analysis. The TRC voiced support for making this transition sooner rather than later. Jay noted that eggs have been successfully collected in Suisun Bay, which had previously been a problem but a viable colony has been found.

4. Information: RMP Financial Update for 2022 Quarter 1

Melissa Foley provided the financial update for Q1 of 2022 to the Steering Committee members. She informed them of various key points related to open budget years, such as the percentages of fees collected and fraction of the budget expended. Melissa also reviewed the status of the RMP undesignated funds, noting recent additions, withdrawals, and the current interest rate for the LAIF. Melissa thanked Eric for sending details from San Jose related to their investment portfolio and interest rates.

Melissa noted the addition of an industrial stakeholder to the RMP. Schnitzer Steel has been added to the program for 2022 and will be charged retroactively for 2018-2021. These funds (~\$77k) will go to the undesignated reserves.

Melissa reminded the SC of the PCB sampling upstream of the GE property for which the Committee had previously approved \$11k in funding. As there will likely be no more storms this year, this effort will be pushed back to next year. The RMP is requesting an additional \$10k to produce a report and obtain a permit for sampling, bringing the total request for this effort to \$21k. Melissa clarified that obtaining the access permit can often be difficult and can sometimes be expensive. Tom Mumley supported this additional funding request, emphasizing that this project is in the interest of the Water Board as continued scrutiny and investigation could allow more follow-up involving additional monitoring around GE. He reiterated that the RMP should not be paying for things that other entities could and should be paying for.

Jay brought forth the renewal of the Estuary News contract. He reminded the SC of the RMP's partnership with the Estuary News publication and this relationship has helped communicate RMP findings to a wider audience. Funding has already been included in the 2022 budget, but the time has come to renew the three-year contract with the publication. The cost is \$16k per year.

Finally, the RMP is requesting \$4k in funds to bring in Ian Wren (Baykeeper) to assist with developing the ongoing WQIF proposal. The RMP and NMS are developing a joint proposal for the WQIF and the NMS has agreed to contribute \$6k. This contribution, in addition to the RMP's \$4k, would total a \$10k budget for Ian's assistance. John Coleman reminded the SC that past efforts of Ian have been involved in litigation regarding some issues related to the WQIF and inquired if this would present a conflict of interest. Tom stated this had been considered but reiterated that Ian would be a paid participant as an independent contractor. Tom reminded the group that Ian has worked really well with the RMP and NMS in the past, contributing unbiased assistance and much value. Tom strongly advocated for Ian's involvement. This decision will be made following further discussion on the ongoing WQIF proposal in a later agenda item.

Tom noted the reserve is in good shape, as the RMP has been cautious in withdrawing from it. It is reassuring to know that there is leeway to open up more funds as need be as we look into this year's budget. Tom inquired if there would be more monitoring piggybacking on USGS cruises for dry season water monitoring, with Melissa answering that a preliminary (thrifty) plan was just going to the Central and South Bay. However, Tom recommended doing the North Bay as well. Melissa noted that there could be a challenge justifying this increase in scope as the wet weather conditions have not produced enough sampling events. There has not been a storm that was big enough to trigger sampling since December. Melissa suggested that if there is not enough rain, funds could be requested for dry season sampling or repurposing wet season funds to expand dry season sampling. If there is a storm in May, Melissa will add an updated request. She also noted that USGS is now allowing third parties such as SFEI to assist in the sampling effort.

Decision:

- Karin North motioned to approve the request for additional funds for PCB sampling and Estuary News contract. John Coleman seconded the motions, and the motions were carried by all present members.

5. Discussion: RMP Proposal for Water Quality Improvement Funds

The EPA Water Quality Improvement Fund has \$24 million to allocate to projects this year. This is \$19M more than previous years, so the RMP and NMS would like to take advantage of this pot of money to supplement program funds. The RMP has not submitted a full proposal before but has been tapped for matching funds, which we expect again this year (1:1 match required).

Based on conversations internally at SFEI and with Tom Mumley, Eric Dunlavey, and Lorien Fono, the RMP and NMS will develop a combined proposal that focuses on observations to support modeling, application of those models, and implementation of management actions, particularly for nutrients and PCBs. A nature-based solution component will also be included to support implementation of nutrient management decisions.

The SC was supportive of the proposed project. They provided suggestions on how to weave the pieces together into a compelling narrative, particularly for the nature-based solutions work, and a visual that highlights the connections between the project components. Tessa Beach was happy to see the nature-based solutions component included in the project plan. Tom and Adam asked about staffing needs if the proposal was awarded. Melissa responded that staff may need to be hired, particularly for modeling. Maureen Dunn also suggested adding sediment management and resilience into the implementation list.

Melissa also presented the potential projects that could be leveraged as matching funds for the work. The SC agreed that only already committed funds (either Special Studies or S&T monitoring) should be used for match at this point so the usual process of allocating funds is not scooped by the proposal. She highlighted over \$1M that fit this criteria and could be used as matching funds. NMS will also be contributing matching funds so high priority RMP projects will be used as match first so the RMP is not committed to doing work that is not fully approved. Melissa also pointed out that matching funds can change throughout the course of the EPA grant, if needed.

Based on the likely timing of the WQIF request for applications, Melissa and Jay expect to bring a more well developed project proposal and budget to the SC at the July meeting. To help develop the WQIF proposal, Melissa revisited the request for the RMP to allocate \$4k to support Ian Wren leading the effort.

Decision:

- Karin North motioned to approve the request for funding for Ian Wren to help develop the WQIF proposal. Maureen Dunn seconded the motion, and the motion was carried by all present members.

6. Information: Workgroup Meetings for 2022 and Special Study Budget

Melissa previewed the recent and upcoming RMP workgroup meetings, giving a brief overview of the organizational structure of the RMP workgroups. The PCB workgroup held a preliminary meeting on April 7, 2022, to discuss the in-Bay modeling strategy document and will follow up with another meeting in early June. The Emerging Contaminants Workgroup followed on April 11-12, 2022. The Microplastics Workgroup met the following week, on April 20, 2022. The Sediment Workgroup will meet on May 17, 2022, and the Sources, Pathways, and Loading (SPL) workgroup will meet on May 23 and 25, 2022.

Melissa announced the addition of three new advisors to the workgroups. The PCB workgroup added Dr. Earl Hayter of the US Army Corps of Engineers. Earl has extensive experience modeling sediment and contaminant transport in rivers, lakes, estuaries, and coastal environments and was highly recommended by Craig Jones. The PCBWG's resident advisor, Frank Gobas, specializes in bioaccumulation and Earl's work will be a great complement. The SPL workgroup will be adding Drs. Robert Budd from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) and Steve Corsi from the USGS. Robert brings expertise working with pesticides and will be able to link monitoring to modeling. Steve's background as a research hydrologist and his experience with remote sensing will be a great source of guidance for the RMP's work with CECs. Steve will be replacing Barbara Mahler, who is unable to return to advising the RMP following her accident. Chris suggested that a formal acknowledgement should be made to recognize Barbara's accomplishments and roles within SFEI, noting the guidance she has provided over the years. Luisa strongly agreed and suggested making a note in the upcoming Pulse. The RMP will be sending Barbara a book with photos of the Bay and past colleagues; she particularly enjoyed receiving the last RMP update.

The RMP has placed an increased emphasis on cross-workgroup coordination and is attempting to make this process more efficient. Melissa invited the SC to provide advice on the plan for carrying out cross-workgroup coordination this year. Melissa explained that most proposals have a home workgroup, but specific people in other workgroups will be asked to provide input. In addition, "lightning" talks will be given at related workgroup meetings to keep people up to date on project progress and how the project connects to potential future studies in that workgroup. Melissa noted that budgets are typically higher for these cross-cutting proposals as they contain multiple workgroups worth of work. Melissa highlighted that of the 20 proposals, 11 of them span multiple workgroups.

Melissa concluded the item by providing an overview of the workgroup proposals. There is \$2.1 million in requested funding, with \$1.4 million available (there is a possible \$100k coming from municipal stormwater monitoring funding). The SC wants the Multi-Year Plan to be fully updated by 2024, with particular interest in ongoing PCB strategy meetings to provide a technical foundation for updating the PCB TMDL. Melissa gave a high-level overview on the proposals of each workgroup.

For the workgroups that have already met, SC members commented on presented proposals. Tom reiterated that he expected additional dialogue and potential additions to the PFAS in Stormwater proposal from the Emerging Contaminants workgroup. Additionally, he stated that the Water Board does not support the microplastic air deposition monitoring proposal for a variety of reasons. He emphasized the RMP should not be the major funder of efforts with an uncertain future, especially for subject matter that is not typically under the

responsibility/jurisdiction of the RMP. Luisa agreed with Tom that the RMP should not shoulder the burden of this funding, suggesting the air quality department as a potential source of funds. Eric Dunlavey thought the proposal was well thought out and that it was a worthwhile effort to investigate in a pilot study. He supported pursuing the project but not totally investing in the current full three year scope. Advisors and stakeholders agreed that Year 1 could operate as a standalone, with an off ramp provided. Diana Lin is currently looking for additional funding for the proposal.

7. Discussion: Website Update

Martin Trinh of SFEI provided an update on the status of the ongoing redesign of the RMP webpage. He highlighted the goals of unifying SFEI pages, access to information most used by stakeholders, and easy access to data. Working with Tony Hale, the redesign will primarily focus on organizing the varied projects of the RMP into a navigable structure that will be intuitive for SC and TRC members. Adopting an aesthetic that resembles the newly redesigned SFEI Environmental Informatics and Resilient Landscape pages, the RMP webpage will follow a hierarchy of main tabs, related sub tabs, and accordions. The main tabs will be “About the RMP”, “Data”, “Governance”, “Communications”, and “Workgroups”. Since the last meeting, Special Studies and Status & Trends subtabs have been added to the “About RMP” main tabs. Additionally, the program structure diagram will be updated with navigable hyperlinks. Previous advice from the SC was incorporated to merge the “RMP Update” and “Pulse” subtabs into an “Annual Report” subtab. A “Council of Wisdom” subtab will be added to the “Governance” main tab. The “Workgroups” main tab will also include a “Past Workgroups” subtab. Publications will be made accessible at multiple levels throughout the website. An item of emphasis was the “Data” tab redesign. A table will be made that includes links to data sets (by matrix and analyte), with hyperlinks to CD3 filters. Martin recommended following the filtering and search tutorials provided on the CD3 website.

Following the presentation, SC members provided feedback on aesthetic and structural aspects. Martin gave an update on the anticipated timeline of the effort. A beta version will go live at the beginning of June and all feedback regarding text and structure should be submitted by the end of June. The site is planned to go live by the end of July, following final comments at the July SC meeting.

Action Item:

- Send out beta version of new website (Martin Trinh, June 13, 2022)

8. Discussion: Communications

The discussion during the Communications item focused on the Pulse and the Annual Meeting. Jay reviewed who had submitted their Pulse perspectives as well as the due dates for those still outstanding. USEPA staff took first prize in getting Jay a draft outline on April 15th. Others are planning to submit drafts by early May. Jay will also follow up with John Coleman, Maureen Dunn, Tessa Beach, and Bridgette DeShields about a perspective on dredging and beneficial

use. If possible, Jay will share the outlines as they are submitted so others can build off of them. The monitoring component of the Pulse will focus on summarizing progress to date on meeting management goals.

The group discussed options for a panel focused on Clean Water Act perspectives at the Annual Meeting. Jay envisions this panel largely complementing the Pulse perspectives. Luisa suggested having something more dynamic for the Annual Meeting that is more forward looking than the Pulse perspectives. Congresswoman Jackie Speier was suggested as an option. The group liked the suggestion; Luisa will reach out to Jackie's staffer to try to schedule. John and Luisa also reminded the group to think about diversity when assembling the panelists and speakers for the day.

The final item for the Communications update was the Estuary News idea list. The June article will focus on DEIJ and profile a RMP scientist in the field. Ariel is also interested in interviewing someone from the RMP for a podcast. Jay suggested Tom or Bridgette as their respective committee chairs would be good options. Luisa suggested Melissa or Alicia Gilbreath as potential people to talk about managing a regional monitoring program and what it means to collect samples in the field. Jay will follow up with Ariel on these options.

Action Item:

- Contact Jackie Speier staff re: Annual Meeting (Luisa Valiela, June 1, 2022)

9. Discussion: Status of RMP Deliverables and Action Items

Melissa reviewed some recently completed deliverables, including the North Bay selenium data management for years 2019, 2020, and part of 2021, the uploading of sediment settling velocity data, CD3 database maintenance, Bird egg SAP revisions, San Leandro Bay PCB sampling, and the publication of the POC data report. Deliverables with upcoming due dates include a draft report on PCB loading in Steinberger Slough, development of sediment bioaccumulation thresholds for PCBs, bird egg collection (sampling underway), a draft of the PFAS in Bay water report, and the In-Bay modeling strategy.

Delayed items include the margins report which is waiting for grain size data, while the QA summary for 2020 is waiting for margins data. Kelly Moran and Diana Lin's stormwater conceptual model Bay-centric write up is waiting on data from CalTrans. Adam and Don have been working through issues with the calculation sheet they were provided for the floating percentile analysis of dredged sediment. This floating percentile methodology was developed in the early 2000's; Adam has reached out to people who had done this work before to assist in troubleshooting. Tom suggested Xavier assisting Don and Adam.

10. Discussion: Plan Agenda Items for Future Meetings

The main items for the July SC meeting include voting on special study funding, an update on the WQIF proposal, planning the agenda for the MYP workshop, and updates on the website revamp, wetland mercury project, and Annual Meeting talks. The Water Board will have an in-person Board meeting on July 1st. SFEI is currently resolving their remote policy and the SC anticipates holding a hybrid Annual Meeting and MYP/SC meeting in the fall.

Adjourn