

Delta Regional Monitoring Program

Governance Work Group Meeting Summary

20 November 2008

1. Attendees

Adam Ballard, Regional Water Board
Amy Cameron, Port of West Sacramento
Chang Cao, San Joaquin County
Nasser Dean, Western Plant Health Assoc.
Erich Delmas, City of Tracy
Roberta Firoved, CA Rice Commission
Johnny Gonzales, State Water Board
Thomas Jabusch, Aquatic Science Center
Tom Kimball, State Water Board
Camron King, CA Assoc. of Winegrape Growers

Karen Larsen, Regional Water Board
Tina Lunt, Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition
Stephen McCord, Larry Walker Associates
Anke Mueller-Solger, CALFED-IEP
Steve Nebozuk, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
Margie Read, Regional Water Board
Brooke Schlenker, US Army Corps of Engineers
Mike Wackman, San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition

2. Context for Meeting

Karen Larsen summarized the impetus for the development of the Delta Regional Monitoring Program (RMP), a summary of which is included in the notes from the 30 September 2008 stakeholder kick-off meeting¹. At that meeting, stakeholder work groups were formed to address specific aspects of the RMP: governance, monitoring questions, funding, data integration, and coordination with other programs. The purpose of this meeting was to begin discussing the governance structure for the pilot phase of the RMP, including how to compel stakeholder participation and progress. The purpose of the pilot phase is to establish a system by which available data are compiled, assessed and reported on a regular basis. During the pilot phase, the framework for obtaining stakeholder input and developing the long-term RMP (i.e., fully integrated, coordinated RMP) will be developed.

3. Group Discussion

The group reviewed the governance straw proposal, which outlined options for four aspects of the RMP governance: operational lead, stakeholder participation, program organization, and degree of formality. Main points from the discussion are summarized below:

- Operational lead should build on an existing organization or structure.
- Independence and credibility can be achieved through external review.
- Concern was raised about the Regional Board's (the Board members rather than staff) role in developing the content of the assessment report. Would the Board be

¹ Notes are available for download at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/delta_water_quality/comprehensive_monitoring_program/index.shtml

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able to modify content developed through the stakeholder process?

Karen responded that the Board would be one among many recipients of the report. Their role would be to determine if the conclusions warrant regulatory action on their part (e.g., modify permit conditions).

- Stakeholder input should be weighed equally among all with an interest in Delta water quality.
- Some advocated for a structure in which a third party, answerable to a board comprised of stakeholders, would be tasked with developing the assessment report and eventually managing the Delta RMP. This is similar to the structure developed for the San Francisco Bay RMP; however, there are a broader range of stakeholder interests in the Delta than in the San Francisco Bay RMP.
- The group expressed concern that the Delta RMP may create another expensive layer of governance.
- Decisions for the long-term RMP need to be consensus based with all interested stakeholders given an opportunity to provide meaningful input.

4. Outcomes & Next Steps

- The group agreed that in order to make informed decisions about governance and monitoring questions for the pilot RMP, they need more information about the existing monitoring programs and the results from the contaminants synthesis report being compiled by UC Davis researchers. Both of those products will be available for public review in early 2009.
- The group agreed that the pilot phase RMP should be led by the Regional Water Board as long as stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide input.
- Scheduling the next stakeholder meetings to discuss governance structure and monitoring questions will occur once the monitoring directory report and the contaminants synthesis report are available for public review.
- Regional Board will submit straw proposals for governance structure (revised draft) and monitoring questions by e-mail to the distribution list for review and comment. Stakeholders can provide comments and input to Regional Board staff (Karen Larsen or Adam Ballard) via e-mail or phone.