

## **Delta RMP Steering Committee Meeting**

**February 27, 2013**

**9:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

**Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Building**

**Sunset Maple Room**

**10060 Goethe Road, Sacramento, CA 95827**

### **Draft Summary**

#### **Attendees:**

*Voting Steering Committee (and/or Alternate) members present<sup>1</sup>:*

Dave Tamayo, Alternate-Stormwater, Phase I Communities (City of Sacramento)

Gregg Erickson, Coordinated Monitoring (IEP/CDFW)

Kenneth Landau, Regulatory – State (Central Valley Regional Water Board)

Linda Dorn, POTWs (SRCSD)

Mike Wackman, Agriculture (Delta & San Joaquin County Water Quality Coalition)

Tim Vendlinski, Regulatory – Federal (U.S. EPA)

Casey Wichert, Alternate-POTWs (City of Brentwood)

Val Connor, Water Supply (SFCWA)

Debbie Webster, Alternate-POTWs (CVCWA)

*On phone:*

Stephanie Reyna-Hiestand, Alternate-Stormwater, Phase II Communities (City of Tracy)

*Others present:*

Brock Bernstein, Facilitator

Cathy Johnson, FWS

Mike Johnson, MLJ-LLC

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<sup>1</sup> Name, Representation (Affiliation)

- Jason Lofton, SRCSD
- Thomas Jabusch, ASC
- Tom Grovhoug, LWA
- Vyomini Pandya, SRCSD
- Stephen McCord, MEI
- Brian Laurensen, LWA
- Karen Ashby, LWA
- Rainer Hoenicke, ASC
- Meghan Sullivan, Central Valley Regional Water Board
- Chris Foe, Central Valley Regional Water Board
- Joe Domagalski, USGS
- Timothy Mussen, SRCSD
- Emily Mortazawi, DSP
- Patrick Morris, Central Valley Regional Water Board
- Padrick Anderson, Pacific Ecorisk
- Stephen Clark, Pacific Ecorisk
- On phone:*
- Tony Pirondini, City of Vacaville
- Karen Gehrts, DWR

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Introductions</b> Brock Bernstein reviewed the agenda and expected outcomes.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Approval of agenda and minutes</b> January 23, 2013, meeting minutes were approved.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Information update</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Update on outcomes from the Feb 1 Regional Board meeting (Meghan Sullivan)</u>: the involvement of Steering Committee members providing the update to the Regional Board was widely viewed as a plus. However, the Regional Board was concerned with the absence of environmental groups</li> </ol>

	<p>on the Steering Committee and the notion of a “pay-to-play” approach. Meghan committed herself to do more personal outreach to environmental groups and indicated that she had now documented prior efforts and steps taken to engage environmental groups in the program development. She intends to solicit ideas from the Steering Committee for participation of environmental groups at the technical level. As a follow-up to the meeting, State Water Board member Tam Doduc suggested to present the information item at an upcoming State Water Board meeting. Meghan asked the Steering Committee whether they are interested in participating again or if it should just be Region 5 staff presenting and to include the Steering Committee talking points in the presentation. The April 23 State Board meeting has been proposed for the item. Gregg Erickson said he would be fine if Region 5 staff presents on behalf of the SC. Linda Dorn said it would be good to have Steering Committee members co-present. Dave Tamayo agreed that it would be useful for Steering Committee members to speak. Ken Landau suggested for Meghan to email what dates are being considered and to ask who wants to participate. Gregg Erickson suggested including expectations from the State Board in the presentation. Val Connor agreed it would be good to have bulleted slides with things that the Steering Committee would want and will help Meghan putting them together.</p> <p>2. <u>Delta water quality modeling session at CWEMF (Stephen McCord)</u>: Stephen McCord will be moderating a session on water quality modeling in the Delta at the annual meeting of the California Water and Environmental Modeling Forum (CWEMF). He indicated that he has three speakers lined up and could add additional talks. The idea is to share perspectives of the greater community of water quality professionals in the Delta. He suggested adding talks that share the Delta RMP perspective with modelers and present ideas for how models could help addressing Delta RMP questions.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>SC materials</b>  The following materials were approved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SC and TAC committee roles</li> <li>2. Mission statement (with minor edits). The SC agreed that some of the language that was removed from the mission statement would be stated in separate goals, objectives, and guiding principles for the program. Brock Bernstein cautioned that there is a sweet spot, i.e. 10-12 guiding principles are needed to help guide the TAC etc. Gregg Erickson suggested making an effort to draft the best possible first cut to ensure quality and maximize productivity at the next meeting, and to clearly distinguish guiding principles</li> </ol>

	<p>from goals and objectives. 3. Management questions (with minor edits)</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Criteria for selecting initial focus areas</b> The criteria were edited and finalized.</p>
<p>6./7.</p>	<p><b>Update on R5 nutrient study plan and opportunities for coordination, timing / Develop recommendations for how the Delta RMP will coordinate with the R5 nutrient study plan</b></p> <p>Chris Foe provided the SC with an update on R5’s nutrient study plan and ideas for working with the Delta RMP. He proposed forming a TAC for the nutrient study that would be coordinated by the Delta RMP. Brock Bernstein suggested considering the proposal by evaluating the question “Does the nutrient issue meet the criteria for selecting initial focus areas?” Dave Tamayo commented that a proposed TAC for the nutrient study plan would need to include experts for areas other than nutrients. For example, the study plan is dealing with questions related to invasive aquatic plant species, which is a problem that goes beyond nutrients. Chris Foe replied that the TAC would work with him on what the elements of R5’s contract for doing the work would be and what expertise to recruit. Mike Wackman expressed concern about having a separate TAC for the nutrient plan under the Delta RMP. An additional issue with the nutrient study plan and including it in Delta RMP is how it meshes with permit requirements. Ken Landau responded that R5 is not seeking to establish a decision-making body for nutrient requirements. There are other things to talk about first and there would be merit in applying things that have already been worked out in principle for the Delta RMP to a real scenario. Chris Foe reiterated that he needs a forum to discuss science (changes to conceptual models, do we need water quality objectives, what form should they have). He emphasized that he is looking for a science study plan to determine whether nutrients are a controllable factor in managing certain beneficial use impairments (i.e. increased distribution and abundance of submerged and floating aquatic vegetation, increased frequency and extent of cyanobacterial blooms, changes in pelagic algal community composition, and low dissolved oxygen in back sloughs). Tim Vendlinski commented that he would like to see the nutrient study plan coordinated under this group. He pointed to the greater need of improving coordination among the Delta constituency around issues of mutual interest. He mentioned receiving calls recently from the offices of representatives McNerney and Garamendi about the issue of water hyacinths in the Delta and herbicidal applications, signaling renewed interest by the Delta constituency in federal involvement in addressing Delta water quality issues. He suggested that the more the Delta constituency is able to</p>

	<p>coordinate, the more it is able to drum up federal funding; and the more it can attract supplemental funding. Dave Tamayo agreed but advised to take a step back and evaluate where the coordination of a TAC for the nutrient study plan fits in the process. Brock Bernstein asked Chris Foe to describe the envisioned role of the RMP in the nutrient study plan. Chris explained that he wants a TAC established and members to include academic researchers, agency staff, and dischargers, and that he expects the Delta RMP to contribute members mostly from the discharger community and is interested in proposals from this group for the TAC. He listed several needs, including a) forming a robust research plan, and b) forming some sort of group to discuss results with. Dave Tamayo replied that he would not be interested in getting the Delta RMP involved at the level of what acceptable levels of nutrient inputs would be, but would be interested in getting involved in addressing questions such as “what is the role of nutrients?” To decide on the involvement of the Delta RMP, a further evaluation of the pros and cons would be required, along with some reassurances by R5 regarding the cons. There would be support in principle for getting Delta RMP involved, if the role is consistent with the stated mission of producing scientific information that is needed to make regulatory decisions. Ken Landau suggested that there are lots of potential opportunities for the Delta RMP to participate, but that he cannot exactly predict all the specific levels of potential involvement until the results of the first version (a white paper) are known. In any case, the role of the Delta RMP would be that of a technical/scientific evaluation group.</p>
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>Next meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting dates are March 27<sup>th</sup> at the Regional Board and April 30<sup>th</sup> at SRCSD. The planned topics for the March 27 meeting are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. TAC             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Objective: setting up a TAC</li> <li>- Expected outcome: recommendation for TAC chairs and members</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Guiding principles</li> <li>3. Cost             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizing and comparing cost from POTW perspective</li> <li>- Discussion item: Regional Board permit reviews and recommendations (Ken Landau)</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Applying criteria             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Objective: Work through background materials and criteria to apply criteria to conditions</li> <li>- Expected outcome: decision about initial focus areas</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>+/<math>\Delta</math><sup>2</sup> on today's meeting</b></p> <p>+: a lot of progress was made</p> <p><math>\Delta</math>: make placards for represented groups (no names)</p>
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Action items</b></p> <p>10.1. Guiding principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. RMP staff to distribute IEP and MeHg guiding principles (due: March 6)</li> <li>b. SC to send feedback (due: March 13)</li> <li>c. Staff to develop draft guiding principles (due: March 20)</li> </ul> <p>10.2. SC to apply criteria to short list of constituents</p> <p>10.3. SC to submit additional suggestions for TAC members and/or chairs</p> <p>10.4. SC prepared to established meeting dates for May-Aug</p>

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<sup>2</sup> A +/ $\Delta$  allows a team, group, or committee quickly to gather feedback from its participants on what it has been doing well and what it could do better. The name, intentionally more positive than Plus/Minus would be, uses delta, the Greek letter that symbolizes change in mathematics, to highlight the team's opportunities for improving how it does its work. The process can take as few as five minutes, i.e. going around the table asking, "What was good/went well in this meeting?" "What can we improve?"