

Minutes/Action Steps from Toxics Committee and Monitoring Committee Meeting

Wednesday, July 20, 2005 9 AM to 2:00 PM

Sacramento River Watershed Program Offices, 327 College St, Suite 205, Woodland, CA

Issue/lead	Background
Introduction/ Meeting Minutes, Agenda review:	<p>Meeting minutes from May 18 meeting accepted.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed and approved the more condensed format of the “Minutes/Action Steps” used for the May 18 minutes, to succeed the longer conversational minutes produced previously by Harris and Co. It was noted that draft notes in more detail will be available (as exemplified by the draft notes distributed) of the dialogue on May 18 on Watershed Health Monitoring. A recording of the meeting will also be available for approximately one week after each meeting which will be used for preparation of Minutes/Action Steps.</p>
Strategic Planning for Watershed Health Monitoring: (All)	<p>The Committee continued the review and discussion of the grouped watershed health indicator list from the March 30 workshop. This continued discussion from the May 18 meeting (see May 18 Minutes/Action Steps) covered the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Awareness • Watershed Program Capacity and Impact • Water recreation and accessibility • Discharges to waterways • River/Creek Corridor Condition • Special Terrestrial Habitat • Fish Health • Bird Health • Human Health <p>Watershed indicators that began to emerge in this second dialogue were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic coverage of watershed groups and depth of program • Community investment in watershed restoration/monitoring (local self-imposed taxation/fee/support) [Above two indicator candidates and first two categories above referred to POES for consideration] • Number of advisories (e.g. fish consumption) and 303(d) listings by SWRCB or regional board • Rapid Bio-assessment benchmarks of macro-invertebrate health indicators • Stream stability ranking (Rosgen) • FRAP indicators such as fuel loading and fire intensity potential • Wetland habitat/river corridor, using Nature Conservancy indicators

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish population returns for anadromous species, using DFG counts • Bird populations, using Audubon annual bird population counts (perhaps with SRWP filter) <p>In discussion of the general approach, the committee began to see the role of SRWP as a consolidator of the indicator reports of others, as noted above. Previously a theme had been to highlight 8-12 indicators, and go to watershed groups to support their collection of data for their watersheds, then consolidating the data for the Sacramento River Basin. The sense of the group was to ask the work team (Kathy Russick, Claus Suverkropp, Otis Wollan, Dennis Heimann) to further investigate the consolidation approach, and initiate a plan to further develop the Watershed Health Indicator concept, to investigate the possible partnerships, and to propose a plan to reach out to watershed groups for review and refinement.</p>
Annual Monitoring Report Update (Claus Suverkropp)	The Report has been distributed to peer reviewers and posted on the website in mid-June. Reminders for feedback are needed now, as it has been one month. The final should be completed September 1, with comment included.
Sac River Conference Water Quality Session (Kathy Russick)	SRWP is collaborating with Sacramento River Preservation Trust and Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum on this year's State of Sacramento River Conference. Water quality section breakout in the afternoon will include Iron Mountain update, mercury, ag waiver monitoring, and drinking water quality. Notice of the conference has been sent out electronically by the webmaster.
Toxicity of unknown causes	One proposal on pesticide profiling has been received and is being reviewed, and contract amendments are in preparation.
SRWP Website (Kathy Russick)	Website will change and expand to provide more information including water quality data. Linkages to other websites (like BDAC) will be more streamlined and more complete in the new site. Website will be re-organized to reflect the structure that emerges from the strategic planning of the Trustees. A resource search portal will also be included, similar to the American River Watershed portal. Kathy Russick is the contact.
Committee Name Change	The Trustees' strategic planning structure proposes the work of the committee be under the name "Watershed Monitoring Committee". The Committee approved by consensus the name change.
Annual Meeting Fact Sheet	Fact sheets for each SRWP committee will be distributed at the SRWP annual Stakeholders Meeting on Oct. 27 th . The Monitoring Committee fact sheet should include a Monitoring Committee strategic planning update as well as updates on matrix and other accomplishments. Kathy Russick and Otis Wollan will work on the fact sheet.

WQ Training Workshop	Working with SWRCB, Regional Board, and SWAMP program, three days of training on September 7-9, with focus on Water Quality monitoring 101, Quality Assurance, and BDAT data base. Discussion included different business model approaches SRWP might take in presenting workshops of this
Liaison reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bioassessment Workgroup held a conference call to discuss the bioassessment component of the 2005-2007 SRWP Monitoring Program. There is \$60,000 grant money allocated for bioassessment monitoring; the workgroup proposed \$20,000 for 05-06 to supplement EPA funding for the Bioassessment Institute, focusing on setting standards for low riffle streams. The remaining \$40,000 will be deferred until 2006 for a decision on how to allocate it. Other special study options were deferred until next year. • Ag Issues work team of Fred Thomas and Otis Wollan will be generating a followup to the Ag Issues White Paper. • SRWP Board has developed an organizational chart which will be posted on the website.
Next Meetings	Set for November 16, 2005

Status Report on Development of
Sacramento River
Watershed Health Indicators

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To: Kathy Russick

From: Otis Wollan, Facilitator for SRWP Watershed Monitoring Committee

Subject: Status Report on Development of Sacramento River Watershed Health Indicators

Date: August 7, 2005

Development of watershed health indicators for the Sacramento River Watershed began with direction from the newly organized SRWP Board of Trustees in late 2003 to re-visit the purpose and scope of the SRWP Monitoring Program. This direction was both for evaluation and for refinement, as well as exploring new directions for the future. As is the practice of SRWP, the exercise was to be conducted by convening a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

A day-long workshop was organized in June 2004 in Chico, which had attendance of over 30 stakeholders from a broad cross-section who gave input into the process. The direction given from that workshop is summarized in

the slide below, which emerged from the October 2004 meeting of the SRWP Board of Trustees.

Two Strategic Directions

Mainstem Health

- **Monitoring**
- **Special Studies**
- **Coordination and Assistance**
- **Public Education**

By initiation; no other entity currently doing this work

Active, lead role, entrepreneurial with network/stakeholder feedback

Business elements well defined by past activities; traditional roles expand

Watershed Health

- **Monitoring by request**
- **Special Studies** (in collaboration)
- **Coordination and Assistance**
- **Public Education**

By request; collaboration; many watershed groups and entities doing work

Passive, supportive role, network/stakeholder driven

New phase of business activities; partnerships, cooperative projects

The SRWP mainstem river monitoring work, that it has been doing since 1996, was supported strongly by the stakeholders in the workshop, and by the Board of Trustees. This reaffirmation provided the green light for the SRWP to proceed with the two years of mainstem river water quality monitoring that the SRWP had proposed in its Prop 50 CALFED Watershed Program grant. A description of the SRWP's mainstem river monitoring can be obtained in a separate technical memo and supporting documents available on the SRWP website, www.sacriver.org.

In the area of Watershed Health, one of the principle suggestions was to investigate the usefulness of developing a set of watershed indicators for the entire Sacramento River watershed. This indicator list would follow the principles identified by the Board of Trustees, i.e. by collaborating with watershed groups and other entities doing

the work, being supportive, and partnering. To explore the viability of the idea and develop the indicator list, SRWP sponsored a second workshop on March 30, 2005 in Sacramento bringing together over 40 stakeholders. During that meeting, an initial list of potential watershed indicators was brainstormed.

During two meetings following the March workshop, the Watershed Monitoring Committee (formerly the Monitoring Committee and Toxics Committees) reviewed and refined a candidate list of watershed indicators from that original brainstormed list developed in the March workshop. In selecting indicators, the Watershed Monitoring Committee worked towards the following:

- Developing a manageable list of indicators (between 10 – 15 total) for the SRWP to track and report on. Any more than this would become too much work to manage on a long-term basis.
- Selecting one or two indicators per indicator category
- Selecting indicators that can be readily understood by non-technical people (the Lake Tahoe secchi disk measurements was discussed often as an ideal example)
- Selecting indicators that are already being tracked or supported by some organization but are not being reported in a watershed context.
- For most indicators, we should see changes over a short period (e.g., 5-10 year period). If we report results that never change, people lose interest in tracking those indicators.

Listed below are the next steps for the SRWP in developing a final list of watershed health indicators:

1. For the two categories in which indicators were not identified by the Watershed Monitoring Committee (River Access/Recreation and Flood Control), experts in those fields will be asked what they suggest as indicators.
2. The Watershed Monitoring Committee formed a work team to refine the list. This will include researching what level of work is being done in each category, and by whom.
3. Numerous other regional organizations have almost simultaneously engaged in developing environmental health indicators. These include the Great Valley Center, Sierra Nevada Alliance, and San Francisco Estuary Institute, as well as additional work from CALFED and other state agencies like CalEPA. The SRWP is organizing a meeting in early October 2005 to compare approaches and assess collaborative potential.
4. Outreach to watershed groups and other entities within the Sacramento River Watershed will need to occur subsequent to the list refinement and coordination among regional groups. The SRWP tracking watershed health indicators within the Sacramento River Watershed will be dependent on the work of others, and will necessarily require their concurrence and supportive work plans.
5. The SRWP currently does not have funding to implement a watershed health tracking and reporting program for

the Sacramento River Watershed. This has been identified by the SRWP Board of Trustees as a high priority project to fund. The SRWP will continue to explore funding opportunities and partnerships to implement this effort.

SRWP Watershed Health Indicator List (draft) revised: 9/12/2005

SRWP Watershed Health Indicator List (draft) revised: 9/12/2005 Watershed Indicator Category	Watershed Indicator	Entity Collecting Information
Public Awareness & Watershed Program Capacity and Impact	Geographic coverage of watershed groups and depth of programs	none
	Community investment in watershed restoration/monitoring (local self-imposed taxation/fee/support)	none
Water Recreation and Accessibility		
Discharges to Waterways	Number of fish consumption advisories and 303(d) listings	
River/Creek Corridor Condition	Benthic macro invertebrates as monitored through rapid bioassessment benchmarks	SRWP, DFG, Regional Board, watershed groups
	Stream stability ranking (Rosgen)	USFS, BLM (?)
	Wetland habitat/river corridor	Nature Conservancy Indicators
Special Terrestrial Habitat	Fire and Resource Assessment Program indicators such as fuel loading and fire intensity potential	California Department of Forestry
	Endangered species and their habitat	California Department of Fish & Game (DFG) Species and Natural Communities Monitoring and Assessment Project www.dfg.ca.gov/habitats/rap/
Fish Health	Fish population returns for anadromous species	DFG fish counts
Bird Health	Bird populations	Audubon annual bird population
Land Use Conversion	Changes in land use designation, acreage representations over time (GIS)	Dept of Resources Legacy Project; SACOG
	Change in conservation land protection	Dept of Resources Legacy Project; (TNC, TPL, DU?)
Environmental Conditions	Water: physical parameters: pH, temperature, conductivity, DO	numerous agencies; some WS groups
	Benthic Macro invertebrates	Some WS groups; DFG

	Invasive species by acreage representations over time	none
Surface/groundwater supply	Hydrograph; flow characteristics	DWR, water agencies
	Water table levels	DWR, water agencies
Flood Control		