



SRWP Monitoring Committee
~ Meeting Summary ~
Tuesday, November 17, 2015
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
DWR North Central Region Office
3500 Industrial Blvd., West Sacramento, CA 95691

Facilitator: Stephen McCord, McCord Environmental, Inc. (MEI)

Meeting Summary by: Holly Jorgensen (SRWP); Stephen McCord (MEI)

Attendees

In Person

Holly Jorgensen, SRWP
Timmarie Hamill, The Stream Team
Alisha Wenzel, CVRWQCB
Cindy Au Yeung, CVRWQCB
Sam Safi, Regional San
Stephen McCord, MEI

Ruben Mora, SWRCB
Sean Maguire, SWRCB
Val Connor, SFCWA
Amye Osti, 34 North

Via Phone

Dennis Heiman, Retired CVRWQCB
Jon Marshack, SWRCB-Monitoring Council
Karly Wagner, 34 North

Scott McReynolds, DWR
Debbie Webster, CVCWA

I. Welcome and Introductions

Stephen McCord reviewed the agenda.

II. Current News and Activities

- Alisha Wenzel (SWAMP): The Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) is working on monitoring plans and getting new contracts finalized and will have more to report once projects start. They are currently conducting bacteria monitoring near Grass Valley including reassessing Wolf Creek that is named in the Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Policy.
- Scott McReynolds (DWR): DWR finished quarterly monitoring and noticed fewer dry creeks than in the previous monitoring run. DWR hired additional staff and is working on finishing the 2008 – 2014 monitoring data summary report that will be broken down into the major subwatersheds and should be available by the end of 2015 on the regional SWAMP website. SWAMP staff will review the report and develop fact sheets.

Scott McReynolds provided SRWP with a draft monitoring plan that contains information on the sites monitored. Alisha suggested that she could provide assistance to 34North on navigating the Water Data Library (WDL) that should contain data through August 2015. All of the data are

available on the WDL and some of the data are available on CEDEN depending on the funding source. In an effort to avoid duplication, only the field data and samples funded by SWAMP are entered into CEDEN with the expectation that the databases will eventually correspond.

- Stephen McCord (MEI): The Central Valley region has more Phase II stormwater programs than any other region. Those dischargers generally do not have any permit monitoring requirements, but may be conducting more monitoring in the future if required in future TMDLs.
- Debbie Webster (CVCWA): Most POTWs that discharge into the Delta or nearby tributaries are contributing to the Delta RMP. There are provisions in the permits for POTWs in the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River watersheds that they can participate in the Delta TMDL unless there is a more appropriate RMP in which they could participate. The POTWs outside of the Delta that are funding the Delta RMP are minimal but that could increase as more permits are renegotiated. The permits require a significant amount of monitoring and the CVRWQCB is working to integrate the monitoring efforts.

CVCWA is currently coordinating two special projects in the watershed. The data collected for the methylmercury special project was recently presented in a progress report. Only the permit-required data are entered into CIWQs, and only receiving water data would ever be entered into CEDEN. The freshwater mussels special project is looking at using the aquatic macroinvertebrates as indicators of stream pollution concerning ammonia criteria. CVCWA is working with UC Davis to develop methodology to use environmental DNA to detect their presence/absence. This is the first effort in CA and possibly in the nation to develop a detection method for an aquatic animal in surface water. The majority of samples have been collected in the Pit River where there have been excessive studies as a result of FERC licensing. Other samples have been collected in 2 creeks in Roseville and in the Delta. Results of the pilot study should be available in spring 2016. A GIS layer of clam findings to date is already available.

- Sam Safi (Regional San): The data from the dissolved CMP is housed internally and needs to be uploaded into a public database. S. McCord suggested that the Delta Conservancy might be able to upload the data as they are uploading the SRWP's historical monitoring data into CEDEN.
- Val Connor (SFCWA/CA Estuary Workgroup): The development of regional portals including the Estuary Portal, San Joaquin River Watershed Portal and Sacramento River Watershed Portal make it possible for the entire Central Valley region to share information and data visualization tools. Val is the new facilitator for the CA Estuary Workgroup, for whom 34North is also developing a portal.
- Jon Marshack (CA Water Quality Monitoring Council): The *Wetland Monitoring Workgroup* recently developed a page of information about the Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Plan (WRAMP) that includes CRAM methods and mapping standards and other information about wetland condition. They have developed a new web page accessible via the CWQMC's website to assist people applying for Prop. 1 grants to get access to the methods that will be required with associated monitoring.

The Healthy Watersheds Partnership (HWP) is looking for partners such as CalFire, US Forest Service, and CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife to validate and update assessments of watershed conditions done under EPA contract as an effort to expand from assessing stream health to looking more broadly at watershed health.

The *Data Management Workgroup* is looking to develop implementation strategies for the Environmental Data Summit white paper that looked at improving data sharing, synthesis and reporting.

The *Bioaccumulation Oversight Group (BOG) Workgroup* recently released information on its latest study that looked at mercury accumulation from small prey fish into nesting grebes in reservoirs and lakes throughout CA. The report concluded that the mercury in the prey fish are a threat to nesting birds in those watersheds and therefore to all of life. The report should be available on the web soon.

The *Collaboration Network* is an effort by the SWAMP citizen monitoring program to provide information and share technical and support tools for monitoring, assessment and reporting for citizen monitoring groups and provide a forum for networking and collaboration. You can access more information and link to webinars via the CWQMC website.

There is some renewed interest from the regional boards and others in CA to bring freshwater bacterial indicator data to the Safe to Swim website. A subcommittee of the *Safe to Swim Workgroup* will be formed to discuss the best way to bring the data from CEDEN into the Safe to Swim portal. The SRWP could also add a page to its portal about this topic, if there is enough interest and data to answer questions.

- Timmarie Hamill (The Stream Team): The Stream Team conducts monthly citizen monitoring at 10 sites in Big Chico Creek. The program has 13 years of monitoring data that includes bioassessment data that is currently in Excel spreadsheets and needs to be uploaded into CEDEN and made available to the public. The Stream Team is working with the City of Chico and the Chico Unified School District on a DROPS grant that includes some funding for additional monitoring.

III. Survey Results

The purpose for the stakeholder interest survey is to collect information about stakeholders' current data needs and monitoring practices. The survey contains 14 questions including 8 water quality questions focused on stakeholder interests and information needs as they relate to water resources and where and how information is accessed and stored, 3 design and function questions focused on the use and spatial extent of the portal, and 3 questions focused on how the portal can support watershed management efforts. H. Jorgensen summarized the responses as of November 15th (see presentation file for details).

Broadly, the results suggest that stakeholders have questions about the current and historic condition of areas needing protection and the nature and extent of the water quality problems. Respondents articulated considerable interest in previous and current management efforts and trends to demonstrate the effectiveness of water quality improvement projects and programs at protecting or restoring beneficial uses. Stakeholders are interested in more information on where data is stored, how and where they can contribute and share their data, current monitoring activities, indicators and assessments, real-time data, and regulations, including permits and policies. Respondents expressed concern for the amount of data that is not easily accessible online including datasets and publications from citizen and other monitoring groups, local agencies, universities and other entities and key water bodies that are not monitored including reservoirs and lakes and areas of the mid to upper watershed and suggested that the portal provide links to data not accessible via the portal.

While numerous stakeholders have pledged to take the survey, only 13 people have completed the survey to date representing state and federal agencies, consultants, RCDs, NGOs, municipalities, water managers, and regulated dischargers. H. Jorgensen stressed that the value of the portal is

dependent upon stakeholder participation and shared knowledge and reminded attendees to take a few minutes to complete the survey this week to share their interests and experiences with data access and assessment. The survey is supplemental and responses will be considered along with other forms of input and feedback to assist in the development of the web portal.

Interests conveyed in the meeting included:

- Recognizing the distinction between monitoring water quality, indicators, and impacts.
- Presenting data to portray current conditions versus trends over time.
- Including non-monitoring information such as maps, photos, reports, current activities, contacts
- Two easy measures of interest to POTWs discharging to surface waters are flow and temperature. Flow data are needed to estimate dilution ratios. Temperature is needed to characterize changes caused by heated discharges and ensure compliance with Basin Plan criteria.

IV. Portal Implementation and Data Updates

S. McCord provided an overview of the development process and updates on action items. H. Amye Osti and S. McCord presented information and an overview of the portal and its development at the SRWP Annual Stakeholder Meeting and Watershed Forum where attendees shown great interest and excitement for a regional portal and its potential to give users access to the extensive water monitoring data, studies, reports and articles on the Sacramento River Watershed and visualization tools to answer questions about the watershed. The project team developed a spreadsheet of available data sources that was reviewed and discussed at the August 19th Monitoring Committee meeting. The document contains ~ 50 sources and is a regularly updated inventory that we will use to determine if/where there is sufficient information to answer questions.

A. Osti and S. McCord reviewed the data that is currently in development and being investigated with the idea of answering questions based on current conditions and trend analysis. They stressed the importance of ensuring that there are data available to answer the questions and provided an in-depth overview of what information is available and potentially useful. 34 North is leading the effort to create a subwatershed inventory of all of the data, highlighting special topics and areas of concern, and making current conditions accessible and viewable via dashboards. Data sets can be mixed and matched with other data sets and displayed in numerous ways including monthly averages and time series. Potential portal topics include general watershed information, real-time monitoring data, reservoir operations, nutrients, mercury, fisheries, safe to swim, abandoned mines, water quality monitoring and criteria, beneficial uses, forest health, fire risk, erosion and drought. Specific portal topics could include programs (i.e. the SWCMP), areas of interest (i.e. Battle Creek and Shasta Lake), and collaborative efforts (i.e. overlapping studies and regional program efforts).

J. Marshak mentioned that there is a statewide effort by California State University at Northridge to produce maps that indicate beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and TMDL criteria designated for all water bodies in the state in Basin Plans.

V. Wrap-Up

Action items identified during the meeting are listed here.

- Holly: Solicit and collect final responses from stakeholders and summarize results of the portal interests' survey.
- Project Team: Develop a draft document that will list the specific water quality management questions and topics along with relevant data sources.

- Holly: Continue to communicate with Monitoring Committee members to identify additional portal stakeholders.
- Stephen: Check on Delta Conservancy contractor's progress uploading historical SRWP monitoring data to CEDEN.
- Stephen: Check on Delta Conservancy's interest in uploading historical monitoring data from the Sacramento area Coordinated Monitoring Program to CEDEN.
- 34North: Create a subwatershed inventory of all available data. Stephen: Contact Alisha Wenzel for CSCI score information.

The next MC meeting will be held in February 2016. Holly will poll the Monitoring Committee for potential meeting dates and times. Chico was suggested as a meeting location.