



# Safe to Eat Workgroup (STEW) Meeting Notes



Friday, November 4, 2022  
9:30 AM - 12:00 PM (Pacific)



[Link to Meeting Slides](#) | [Link to Meeting Recording](#)

## Agenda Overview

Item	Topic	Lead	Time
1.	<a href="#">Roll Call, Agenda Review, Goals of the Meeting</a>	Jay Davis	9:30 AM (10 min)
2.	<a href="#">Information: Quick Updates</a> <b>Desired Outcome:</b> Inform and update the STEW	Jay Davis	9:40 AM (20 min)
3.	<a href="#">Information: 2022 Sampling and Analysis Update</a> <b>Desired Outcome:</b> Inform and update the STEW	Jay Davis, Autumn Bonnema	10:00 AM (20 min)
4.	<a href="#">Information: Final Monitoring Plan for 2023</a> <b>Desired Outcome:</b> Inform and update the STEW	Jay Davis	10:20 AM (40 min)
<b>Break</b>			11:00 AM (10 min)
5.	<a href="#">Discussion: Planning for 2024 and Beyond</a> <b>Desired Outcome:</b> Inform, get feedback from the STEW	Jay Davis	11:10 AM (20 min)
6.	<a href="#">Discussion: 2023 STEW Meetings</a> <b>Desired Outcome:</b> Inform, get feedback from the STEW	Anna Holder	11:30 AM (10 min)
7.	<a href="#">Wrap-up and Adjourn</a>	Anna Holder	11:40 AM (10 min)

## **Agenda Details**

### **Item 1. Roll Call, Agenda Review, Goals of the Meeting**

#### **Discussion**

- See slides (6-7) and [recording](#) for full discussion

#### ***Program/STEW Leads***

Anna Holder (SWAMP)  
Jay Davis (SFEI)

#### ***Peer Review Panel***

Harry Ohlendorf (Consultant)

#### ***OEHHA***

Huyen Tran Pham  
Wesley (Wes) Smith

#### ***MLML/MPSL***

Chris Beebe  
Autumn Bonnema  
Wes Heim  
Gary Ichikawa  
Billy Jackl  
Scot Lucas

#### ***Regional Boards***

R1: Rich Fadness  
R2: Kristina Yoshida  
R3: Melissa Daugherty  
R4: Emily Duncan  
R5: Jordan Hensley, Angela Llaban,  
Lauren Smitherman  
R6: Laurie Scribe  
R7:  
R8: Heather Boyd  
R9: Chad Loflen, Carey Nagoda

#### ***State Board***

OIMA/SWAMP  
Chad Fearing  
Jennifer Salisbury  
Badhia Yunes Katz

#### **DWQ**

Amanda Blackwell  
Steve Camacho

#### **DWR**

MarielaPaz Carpio-Obeso  
Lisa Jensen

#### ***Water Quality Monitoring Council***

Nick Martorano (OIMA/SWAMP)

#### ***Other***

Sarah Brower (City of San Diego)  
Michele Castro  
Daniel (Dan) Deeds (US Bureau of  
Reclamation)  
Cassandra Evenson (CA Dept. of Water  
Resources)  
Joe Guzman (County of Orange)  
John Heltzel  
Cam Irvine (Robertson-Bryan, Inc.)  
Robert Mackie (Orange County  
Environmental Resources Public  
Works)  
Mina Mohammadi  
James Nunez  
Jian Peng (County of Orange)  
Mina Ziaei (San Diego County Water  
Authority)

#### **Action Items**

- None

## Item 2. Quick Updates

### Discussion

- See slides (8-12) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- 2019 Bass lakes (Panel 3) data and report (almost) complete!
  - Challenge with subcontracts for Peer Review Panel
- 2020 Coast data and report
  - Sample status: final 3 PCBs samples sent to SGS-Axys for analysis in Mar 2022; results pending submission to SWAMP.
  - Data status: all data - except the 3 PCB samples mentioned above - have been processed.
  - Report status: The [Cruise Report](#) is complete. We will produce a report in 2025 after the remainder of the coast has been sampled (2024) and data processed (2025).
- 2021 Bass lakes (Panel 4) data and report
  - Sample status: All analyses complete.
  - Data status: Metals/Other/Age data are processed; waiting on organics data from SGS-Axys.
  - Report status: The [Cruise Report](#) is complete; draft data report will be distributed and ready to discuss during the Apr. 2023 STEW Meeting; final data report will be published shortly thereafter.
- Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Realignment & Statewide Tribal Engagement Update
  - San Diego Advisory Committee Meeting 5 - Oct 4: discussed: analysis priorities, OEHHA consumption advisory development process & Communication and Outreach Plan priorities
  - San Diego Advisory Committee Meeting 6 - Q2 2023
  - Anna attended and presented at [Tribal EPA Region 9 Annual Conference](#), Oct 25-27
- New fish consumption advisories and related material
  - [Protocol for Fish Sampling and Analysis to Support the Development of Fish Advisories in California \(Aug 2022\)](#)
  - [Antelope Lake \(Plumas County, Aug 2022\)](#)
  - [Collins Lake \(Yuba County, Aug 2022\)](#)
  - [Statewide Advisory for Eating Fish from California Rivers, Streams, and Creeks without Site-specific Advice \(Sep 2022\)](#)
  - [Lake Henshaw \(San Diego County, Sep 2022\)](#)
  - *Coming soon:* updates on Castaic Lake (last updated in [2017](#)) and Pyramid Lake (last updated in [2013](#))
  - Potential future agenda item: Presentation from OEHHA regarding upcoming fish consumption advisory development plans and priorities, with opportunity for STEW input

- Updates on TMDLs
  - Staff are currently focusing on [Delta Methylmercury TMDL](#); will move to scientific peer review by the spring.
  - Also working on Central Valley mercury strategy and scoping out Rivers TMDL development given limited staffing and resources.
  - The [Statewide Mercury Control Program for Reservoirs](#) is being led by State Board (Project leads: [Steve Camacho](#) and [Rebecca Fitzgerald](#)).
- Monitoring Council Updates
  - [Next meeting](#): Dec. 1, 2022
  - California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Co-chair position currently vacant
  - Working with the National Water Quality Monitoring Council which will host its [13th National Monitoring Conference](#) during the week of Apr. 24–28, 2023.
- Other updates from the group
  - In Feb/Mar 2023 The U.S. EPA Office of Water, will hold a virtual National Forum on Contaminants in Fish to bring together interested groups to discuss the many issues related to human health and contaminants in fish. The [2023 National Fish Forum](#) will be held: Feb 28, Mar 2, Mar 7 and Mar 9, 2023 (9 AM - 2:30 PM PT / 12:00 PM - 5:30 PM ET) | [Registration Link](#)
    - [Abstracts](#) were accepted through Nov. 6, 2022.
    - [Proceedings from past Fish Forums](#) (last one was in [2014](#))
  - [San Francisco Bay Regional Monitoring Program](#) (Bay RMP) PFAS Study
    - Analyzing archived samples collected in 2019 to provide a more thorough assessment for the Bay - results are coming back from the lab and will be interpreting results soon.
    - Early trends from data collected since 2009: PFAS levels in the Bay appear to be persisting above levels where other states have developed thresholds and/or fish consumption advisories.
  - [Southern California Bight Regional Monitoring Program](#) - Bight 2023
    - Planning for Bight 2023 is in the works. It is an off year for sport fish, however there has been traction for studies relating to trawl fish and shellfish. Final decisions on which studies will be prioritized still to come.
    - If the shellfish study moves forward, it will likely have harmful algal bloom (HAB) components (i.e. analysis of microcystins, Domoic Acid).
    - Potential future agenda item: Presentation from SCCWRP regarding Bight 2023 plans, monitoring/analysis updates, etc.
  - [California Bacteria Summit Update](#)
    - Shellfish wasn't discussed as much as expected, but more conversations are in the works.

## Action Items

- Jay: Complete subcontracts with Peer Review Panel.
- Jay: Obtain comments and finalize 2019 Bass lakes (Panel 3) data and report.
- Jay: Draft 2021 Bass lakes (Panel 4) data and report so it is distributed and ready to discuss during the Apr. 2023 STEW Meeting.
- Jay: Follow-up with Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) about 2020 Southern California coastal data submission to SWAMP/CEDEN.
- Anna/Jay: Follow-up with Wes S. about scheduling a presentation from OEHHA regarding upcoming fish consumption advisory development plans and priorities.

## Item 3. 2022 Sampling and Analysis Update

2022 sampling has been occurring since April. An update on sampling and analysis status and accomplishments will be provided.

- SWB\_Realign\_RWB9\_2022: Moss Landing Marine Laboratories' Marine Pollution Studies Laboratory (MPSL) fish collections are complete, the San Diego Region (RWB9) is still planning to collect invertebrate samples. Mercury, Selenium and Arsenic results are already being reported, but no organics samples have been shipped to SGS-AXYS yet. All fish collected have been authorized for dissection as of this week, and the lab is awaiting the delivery of the invertebrate samples.
- SWB\_FishRiv\_2022 (collaboration with the Central Valley Region): Only the Mokelumne Fish Hatchery collection and dissection remains. Mercury and Selenium results are being reported, but no organics samples have been shipped yet.
- RWB3\_SS\_BOG (2022): Central Coast Region (RWB3) beaches and piers collections complete. All fish collected have been authorized for dissection as of this week. Mercury and Selenium results are being reported, but no organics samples have been shipped yet.

## Discussion

- See slides (13-21) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- Sampling crews were able to collect at all sites:
  - Realignment sites were focused in the San Diego Region (Region 9) and included: 2 lake locations, 2 river locations, 6 coastal locations.
  - Rivers sites were focused in the Central Valley Region (Region 5) and included 4 sites.
  - Sampling for the Central Coast Region (Region 3) Special Study included 5 coastal sites.
- Crews experienced some challenges with collecting at certain locations (e.g., access to site locations, low water levels, high air & surface water temperatures. High surface water temperatures impact ability to electrofish: electrofishing was not possible more than half of the 32 lakes sampled for US EPA's National Lakes Assessment this summer)

- Realignment sampling update details
  - Project code: SWB\_Realign\_RWB9\_2022
  - Metals data from earlier collections have been submitted to SWAMP; all remaining samples have been authorized for dissection and analysis; organics samples have not yet been sent to the lab for analysis.
  - Invertebrate collections will be conducted by Region 9 staff, starting the week of Nov. 7; beginning with oysters and/or mussels depending on site location. Lobster collections will be conducted later in Nov.
- Rivers sampling update details
  - Project code: SWB\_FishRiv\_2022
  - All fish collections and dissections complete except for from the Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery.
    - The plan is to receive salmon samples from the hatchery on Nov 10; if steelhead samples are a possibility, they will be received in Jan.
  - Metals (Se) data from earlier collections have been submitted to SWAMP; analysis of all remaining samples for Hg and Se are in progress; organics samples have not yet been sent to the lab for analysis.
- Central Coast Region Special Study sampling update details
  - Project code: RWB3\_SS\_BOG
  - All fish collections complete and dissections are in progress
  - Metals (Se) data from earlier collections have been submitted to SWAMP; analysis of all remaining samples for Hg and Se are in progress; organics samples have not yet been sent to the lab for analysis.

### **Action Items**

- MPLS: Continue processing samples
- Region 9: Collect invertebrate samples over coming weeks

### **Item 4. Final Monitoring Plan for 2023**

This group has been discussing the sampling plan for 2023 and beyond in some capacity since Jan 2021. An update on the final 2023 sampling plan will be presented.

### **Discussion**

- See slides (22-30) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- Final Monitoring Plan to be sent out next week
  - The Monitoring Plan will look similar to past monitoring plans, with minor revisions that are specific to Panel 5
- Monitoring Priorities: Complete Bass Lakes Panel 5 and remain consistent with Panels 1-4. If budget allows, also include OEHHA add-ons and possibly other high priority additions.

- Request for additional waterbodies - priorities discussion
  - Lake Hodges (Region 9): interest in getting data related to a desired post-oxygenation study, UC Merced is still studying mercury in the water column
    - Note from Chad Loflen (Regional SWAMP Coordinator) - Region 9 staff may be able to do collections at Lake Hodges to reduce costs.
  - Region 8 lakes: small regional park lakes that regularly have folks fishing; locations have never been sampled, interest in learning baseline levels.
- Note on Hernandez Reservoir (Region 3)
  - Melissa Daugherty (Regional SWAMP Coordinator) thinks the location might also have low water levels, so it may warrant removal from the list of waterbodies to sample.
- Discussion of State Board contacts that the STEW should coordinate with
  - Statewide Mercury Program - Lauren Smitherman can connect the STEW with appropriate representatives
  - Note from the chat: Lori Webber ([Statewide Water Quality Assessment](#) / Integrated Report Program) said she was looking to have staff participate more in the Council Workgroups. Someone like Lisa Holmes could help identify what lakes are missing samples sufficient for their integrated report assessments, for example.
- Timeline
  - Sep. 2022 - Permit submitted
  - Nov. 4, 2022 - Discuss Plan at STEW meeting
  - Nov. 18, 2022 - STEW Plan review & comments due
  - Nov. 30, 2022 - Finalize Monitoring Plan
  - Jan. 2023 - QAPP update complete & posted online
  - Feb./Mar. 2023 - Kick-off meeting
  - Apr. 2023 - Monitoring to begin
- General Plan for 2023
  - STEW Priorities: Bass Lakes Panel 5 sampling, Draft & Final report on Bass Lakes Panel 4 (2021)
  - Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Priorities: San Diego Realignment, Prep for next Realignment Region, Statewide Tribal Engagement, Tribally-centered Training Series, Program and STEW Web Revamp

### **Action Items**

- Jay/Autumn: circle back with Chad L. regarding coordinating monitoring at Lake Hodges, if appropriate
- Jay/Anna: Send out draft Monitoring Plan by Nov. 10
- All: STEW Monitoring Plan review & comments due Nov. 18
- Jay: Finalize Monitoring Plan by Nov. 30
- Anna: Post & distribute final monitoring plan, Dec.
- Anna: Post revised QAPP, Jan. 2023

- Anna: Schedule & coordinate Kick-off meeting for Feb./Mar. 2023
- Melissa D.: Reach out to Hernandez Reservoir contacts regarding anticipated water levels, circle back with Jay on whether that location should be removed from the priority list
- Anna: Circle back with Laruen S. (Statewide Mercury Program) & Lori W. (Integrated Report) about State Board STEW Representatives/Contacts

## **Item 5. Planning for 2024 and Beyond**

This group has been discussing the sampling plan for 2024 and beyond in some capacity since Jan 2021. An update on the more solidified 2024 sampling plan and the longer-term plan will be presented.

### **Discussion**

- See slides (32-33) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- Planned activities for 2024:
  - Complete Coast Round 2 Monitoring
  - Draft and final data report on Panel 5 Lakes (i.e., similar to other Panel-specific data reports)
  - Draft interpretive report on full bass lake dataset (i.e., analysis and interpretation of all data from the 10-year study)
  - Long-term monitoring priorities assessment, considering: reduced core monitoring budget, Realignment priorities, equity and management priorities, Regional Board priorities, OEHHA data needs, leveraging other efforts (e.g., EPA NLA)
- Planned activities for 2025:
  - Final interpretive report on full bass lake dataset
  - Draft report (data and interpretive) on 2nd coast survey
  - Realignment sampling (Region TBD)

### **Action Items**

- All: Begin thinking about (and documenting!) long-term needs and priorities and be ready to discuss in 2024
- Anna/Jay: Develop and share prompts for folks to think about as they prepare for discussions in 2024



## Item 6. 2023 STEW Meetings

Over the past two years, this group has scheduled standing quarterly meetings, the majority of which have been from 9:30 am - 12:30 pm on the last Wed of the month in Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct, and held over Zoom. During this meeting we will check-in with the STEW on how this has been working for attendees, and make a plan for when and how we will meet in 2023.

STEW Co-chairs propose:

- We continue to meet over Zoom to reduce travel costs for attendees and increase the ability for more people to participate.
- 2023 meetings to be scheduled from 9:30 am - 12:30 pm on the last Wed of the month in Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct. Specific dates are: Jan 25, Apr 26, Jul 26, Oct 25.

### Discussion

- See slides (34-35) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- No objections to keeping the same meeting schedule for 2023 (see above for dates)

### Action Items

- Anna: Send out calendar invitations for 2023 Meeting dates

## Item 7. Wrap-up and Adjourn

- Review action items
- Review items for next meeting
- Next meeting: Jan 25, 2022, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

### Discussion

- See slides (36-41) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- Potential agenda items for future meetings
  - 2022 Sampling Update - may not be necessary; if added to the agenda, it definitely doesn't need 40 min.
  - Presentation from Collin Eagles-Smith on his tissue work in the Snake River's Hell's Canyon Reservoir
  - Presentation from SCCWRP regarding Bight 2023 plans, monitoring/analysis updates, etc.
  - Presentation from OEHHA regarding upcoming fish consumption advisory development plans and priorities
  - Update on the implementation of [AB 762](#) - Fish and Shellfish Health Advisory Postings.
    - See the [July 2022 STEW Meeting Notes](#) (Item 5) for the last update.
    - *Question:* Regional Board staff have received emails from Reservoir owners indicating that they need to coordinate with the Regional Boards to receive grant funds. What coordination is actually needed?
      - Recommend contacting Justin Malan ([justin@ccdeh.com](mailto:justin@ccdeh.com)), the CCDEH Executive Director, with questions.

- Presentation from Jay on San Francisco Bay Regional Monitoring Program (Bay RMP) PFAS study results
- Review of Action Items for each agenda item. See the “Action Items” section under each Agenda Item above for more details.

### **Action Items**

- Anna: Post meeting notes, presentation, and recording on the [Meetings page](#), send email to STEW once complete.
- Anna/Jay: Coordinate and schedule guest speaker presentations
- Anna: Reach out to US EPA and connect with the new SWAMP/STEW contact
- All: Email [anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov) with future STEW meeting speaker/topic recommendations.