



Safe to Eat Workgroup (STEW) Meeting Notes



Wednesday, July 31, 2024
9:30 AM - 12:00 PM (Pacific)

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

Agenda Overview

Item	Topic	Lead	Time
1.	Roll Call, Agenda Review, Goals of the Meeting	Jay Davis	9:30 AM (10 min)
2.	Information: Quick Updates Desired Outcome: Inform and update the STEW	Jay Davis	9:40 AM (20 min)
3.	Information: AB 762 - Fish and Shellfish Health Advisory Postings Update Desired Outcome: Inform and update the STEW	Angie Noorda	10:00 AM (20 min)
4.	Discussion: Draft Long-term Monitoring Plan (2025-2029) Desired Outcome: Inform, get feedback from the STEW	Jay Davis, Anna Holder	10:20 AM (30 min)
Break			10:50 AM (10 min)
5.	Discussion: Draft Monitoring Plan for 2025 (Lakes) Desired Outcome: Inform, get feedback from the STEW	Jay Davis	11:00 AM (30 min)
6.	Discussion: OEHHA Poster Feedback Desired Outcome: Inform, get feedback from the STEW	Wes Smith	11:30 AM (20 min)
7.	Wrap-up and Adjourn	Anna Holder	11:50 AM (10 min)

Agenda Details

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

- See [slides](#) (3-4) and [recording](#) for full discussion

Program/STEW Leads

Ali Dunn (SWAMP)
 Anna Holder (SWAMP)
 Jay Davis (SFEI)

Peer Review Panel

Harry Ohlendorf (Independent)
 Christopher (Chris) Schmitt (U.S. Geological Survey)

OEHHA

Loren Chumney
 Tran Pham
 Wesley (Wes) Smith

MLML/MPSL

Autumn Bonnema
 Wes Heim
 Gary Ichikawa

State Board

OIMA/SWAMP

Chad Fearing
 Andrew Hamilton
 Jennifer Salisbury
 Kevin Song
 Elena Suglia

DFA

Angie Noorda

Regional Boards

R1: Mike Thomas
 R2: Gerardo Martinez, Kristina Yoshida
 R3:
 R4: Emily Duncan
 R5: Lauren Leles, Cecile Mioni, Heather Staplin
 R6: Kelly Huck, Laurie Scribe
 R7:
 R8:
 R9:

Water Quality Monitoring Council

Nick Martorano (OIMA/SWAMP)

Other

Noah Ben-Aderet (CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife)
 Leah Hampton (Southern California Coastal Water Research Project)
 Monica Hiner (Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation)
 Vardui Hovsepian (Los Angeles County Recreational Waters)
 Duyen Kauffman (Biomonitoring California)
 Alan Marr (Orange County Environmental Health)
 Sharyle Patton (Commonweal)
 Mina Ziaei (San Diego County Water Authority)

Item 2. Quick Updates

- See [slides](#) (5-12) and [recording](#) for full discussion

Monitoring Data & Documentation Update

Year	Monitoring Element	Data Status	Document Status (Est. completion date)
2021	Lakes (Panel 4)	Remaining organics data pushed to CEDEN in Jul 2024!	Cruise Report Data Report (2024*)
2022	Realignment (Region 9)	ETA for organics data to be available in CEDEN (TBD)	Cruise Report Data Report (2024*)

Year	Monitoring Element	Data Status	Document Status (Est. completion date)
2022 con't	Rivers (Region 5)	ETA for organics data to be available in CEDEN (TBD)	Cruise Report Data Report (2024*)
	Special Project (Region 3)		NA - up to R3 project leads to write report
2023	Lakes (Panel 5)	ETA for metals data to be available in CEDEN (Sep 2024) ETA for organics data to be available in CEDEN (TBD)	Cruise Report Data Report (2024*) Interpretive Report (2025)
2024	Coast (Central & Northern CA)	Monitoring began Jul. 15, 2024 Regular updates to be shared via STEW Email List	Monitoring Plan Data Report (2025) Interpretive Report (2026)
	PFAS Archive Project	Preparation of Archives (TBD) Ship to Lab for Analysis (By Mar 31, 2025) ETA for organics data to be available in CEDEN (TBD)	TBD
2025	Lakes	NA	DRAFT Long-Term Plan DRAFT Monitoring Plan Data Report (2026)

* Upon receipt of organics data

Regular Quick Updates

- [New OEHHA fish consumption advisories](#)
 - [Gene Wash Reservoir \(San Bernardino County, Jun 2024\)](#)
 - *Coming soon:* [Lake Berryessa](#) (Napa County; last updated Mar 2009), [Putah Creek including Lake Solano](#) (Yolo, Solano Counties; last updated Mar 2009)
- [Monitoring Council Updates](#)
 - New Co-Chair representing CalEPA - [Phil Crader](#), Deputy Director, State Water Board
 - Jun 27 meeting on Open Data Topics - [Agenda](#) | [Recording](#)
 - [National Monitoring Conference](#) - Mar 10-14, 2025, Green Bay, Wisconsin
 - Call for abstracts for 15-minute oral presentations and posters in late July
 - **Abstracts due August 19, 2024.** Submitters will be notified in November 2024 if they have been accepted to present
 - [Next meeting:](#) Sep 26

- [Tribal Bioaccumulation Monitoring Training Series](#)
 - Past training materials available on the [webpage](#)
 - Jan: Introduction to the Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program and Safe to Eat Workgroup - [Slides](#) | [Recording](#)
 - Feb: Bioaccumulation monitoring study design & preparation - [Slides](#) | [Recording](#)
 - Mar: Bioaccumulation monitoring sample collection protocols & processing - [Slides](#) | [Recording](#)
 - If you attended a training or reviewed resources *after* a training - please consider [completing this survey](#) to share your feedback with us!
 - **Next Training: Tue. Sep. 17, 2024** - *NEW FOCUS*: Bioaccumulation monitoring data QAQC & Tribal data use in the CA Integrated Report | [Registration Link](#)
 - Sep reminder and poll for scheduling final two trainings will be shared in Aug via the [Tribal Matters](#) and [STEW](#) email lists.
- Other updates from the group
 - On Jul 11, 2024, U.S. EPA published updated recommendations for contaminants that Tribal, state, and territorial fish advisory programs should consider monitoring in locally caught fish to protect public health, which include several per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS). For more information, see the [press release](#), view the [National Guidance webpage](#) & [Fact Sheet](#).
 - Delta Stewardship Council Science for Communities Workshop - Recap | [Recording](#)
 - [San Francisco Bay RMP](#) sport fish monitoring in 2024
 - Sampling started in Jul 2024; Sampling and Analysis Plan posted soon
 - Some coordination with Region 2 Realignment in this year's sampling plan
 - Funding for water quality monitoring in the Bay is increasing substantially due to the establishment of an [EPA Program Office for the San Francisco Bay Delta Watershed](#). This will include some funding for community-engaged monitoring that can augment San Francisco Bay Realignment work in 2024/2025 and probably funding for continued work along these lines after the Realignment effort.
 - San Francisco Bay consumption survey questionnaire development
 - Final report on questionnaire development and meeting materials are available on the [project webpage](#)
 - [All Positives Possible](#) Carquinez Strait monitoring study
 - Fish monitoring for mercury, PCBs, PFAS at four locations Sep-Nov 2023
 - Sampling completed and included San Francisco Bay RMP methods and collection by community members
 - Sample processing and analysis underway by MLML and SGS-Axys

Action Items

- MPSL & Anna: Continue to send regular 2024 Coast monitoring updates to the STEW Email List
- Regarding the Tribally-centered Training Series
 - **If you represent a Tribe** and are interested in the Training Series, please [register for the course\(s\) of interest to you!](#)
 - **If you attended a training or reviewed resources after a training**, please consider [completing this survey](#) to share your feedback with us!
- Jay & OEHHA: Coordinate on microcystin in fish tissue literature review

Item 3. AB 762 - Fish and Shellfish Health Advisory Postings Update

[Assembly Bill 762](#) (AB 762, 2019) requires Local Health Officers to post fish advisories that have been issued by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) for approximately 135 site-specific water bodies in California upon appropriation of state funds. The Fish and Shellfish Consumption Advisories Program Grant Project is between the State Water Board and the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH) and will provide reimbursement to Local Health Offices for eligible work undertaken. This agenda item will include an overview of the status of the grant agreement.

Discussion

- See [slides](#) (13-27) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- Key updates from presentation:
 - Funding Round 1 is complete - Approx. \$213,000 was reimbursed to 22 local agencies for 665 signs that were installed at 68 water bodies
 - Funding Round 2 is in progress - \$237,000 will be available, outreach and application will be available soon, likely due this fall.
- Is the report to the legislature and accompanying webpage specific for this project available?
 - Not yet.
- Is OEHHA or the Water Boards familiar and in contact with the [Fish Contamination and Education Collaborative](#)?
 - OEHHA is engaged with that Collaborative.

Action Items

- Anna: Coordinate with Angie N. to share announcements and other updates via the STEW email list

Item 4. Draft Long-term Monitoring Plan (2025-2029)

The STEW has been discussing Long-term Monitoring Priorities in some capacity since Jan 2023. Feedback was collected (Oct 2023-Feb 2024), synthesized and discussed (Mar 2024), presented to SWAMP Management to make final priority decisions and then reported back to the STEW (Apr 2024). The draft Long-term Monitoring Plan (2025-2029) that reflects past discussions, feedback, and final priorities will be presented.

Discussion

- See [slides](#) (28-46) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- For a more detailed review of the Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process, see the April 2024 STEW Meeting, Item 3 [Notes](#), [Slides](#), and [Recording](#).
- Recap of the Funding Tiers Summary:
 - Tier 1 ~ \$325K/yr (Weak Coffee / Less than what we have now)
 - Tier 2 ~ \$500K/yr (Bare Bones / Current funding)
 - Tier 3 ~ \$900K/yr (Realignment and pick one Add-on, below)
 - Tier 4 ~ \$3M/yr (A + B + C + D + E)
 - “funding commensurate with the task of monitoring and reducing risks from bioaccumulation in a state as large and diverse as California”
 - Add-on Project Focus Menu
 - (A) 2015-24 Statewide Design
 - (B) Turbo Realignment
 - (C) Consumption Survey
 - (D) Shellfish
 - (E) Open data and app
- In the report, can a table be included that summarizes and compares all of the different tiers?
 - Yes
- What are the long-term trends in shellfish bioaccumulation, given their shorter lifespans?
 - In general, shellfish are an index for bioaccumulation over a period of a couple of months, compared to fish which tend to represent annual bioaccumulation.
- For the weak coffee plan - if the \$175K were rolled into the Realignment process, what would that enable the Realignment to do?
 - It depends on the region(s) under consideration, requests received by Tribes and Communities that engage, Regional contributions to the process, etc.
- Are we getting enough engagement from current and past Realignment efforts?
 - The engagement we are getting is really helpful, although we do hope for more engagement in the future.

Action Items

- All: **Email recommendations to Jay (jay@sfei.org) by Sep 1**
- Jay:
 - Incorporate feedback into Plan
 - Present Final plan at Oct STEW Meeting
 - Finalize Plan, work with Anna to distribute and post on website
- Regional Boards: Start thinking about which year(s) you might want to contribute discretionary / SWAMP funds to leverage already planned Statewide monitoring (sampling, analysis & archives)

Item 5. Draft Monitoring Plan for 2025 (Lakes)

The STEW has undergone the 2024 Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment, during which feedback was collected (Oct 2023-Feb 2024), synthesized and discussed (Mar 2024), and presented to SWAMP Management to make final priority decisions (Apr 2024). An update on the monitoring plan for 2025, which was informed by that process, will be provided and initial discussion of requests for additions to the monitoring plan will begin.

Discussion

- See [slides](#) (48-58) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- Regarding mercury in predators: are we still thinking about analyzing up to 14 bass if that's what we are able to collect, to support the size to mercury relationship?
 - That's a good default design, but we might change it to accommodate what the requestor wants.
- Regarding the Clear Lake request: Region 5 has extra funding for analysis through Moss Landing, and would be interested in discussing how they might be able to contribute to and partner with the Statewide Program.
- Regarding the long-term priorities: why is long-term monitoring for rivers not being prioritized?
 - We aren't doing long-term surveys for any water bodies over the next five years - we will only be focused on filling data gaps, and we intend to visit rivers in 2027.
 - As far as long-term monitoring of rivers goes, it comes down to balancing cost and our limited resources.
- Note that Region 6 sampled June Lake (PCBs in Rainbow Trout), Silver Lake (PCBs in Brown Trout), and Diaz Lake (no PCB data needed) in 2024.
- If the lakes we want to request contain endangered species and will cause issues with permitting, should we even submit the request?
 - Yes. We will review the request and take into consideration logistics (like permitting challenges). What's important is that we document all requests so we can look at them collectively and make decisions to meet as many requests as possible.

- In the tables on slides 52, 53, and 56 - what does S, M, L, XL stand for?
 - Those letters indicate the size of the lake.
 - S = Small Lake = 1 sampling location
 - M = Medium Lake = 2 sampling locations
 - L = Large Lake = 2-3 sampling locations
 - XL = Extra Large Lake = 4 sampling locations

Action Items

- All: **Email requests to Jay (jay@sfei.org) by Sep 1**
- Jay:
 - Incorporate feedback into Plan
 - Present Final plan at Oct STEW Meeting
 - Finalize Plan, work with Anna to distribute and post on website
- MPSL: Submit collection permit
- Anna:
 - Follow-up with Lauren L. regarding partnership with Region 5 to support analysis of Clear Lake samples
 - Follow-up with Tribes that submitted requests for lakes again, to see if they can provide more details about species and analytes they would like us to see collect and analyze in 2025-2026.

Item 6. OEHHA Poster Feedback

OEHHA is considering including QR codes in future fish consumption advisory posters. During this item OEHHA will present potential options for future poster updates and will be soliciting feedback from the STEW.

Discussion

- See [slides](#) (59-60) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- Recap of the poster design options:
 - (A) Original format - do not add QR Code
 - (B) Replacing 'Choose the Right Fish' on upper right with QR Code
 - (C) Center-aligned title and text, QR Code on the bottom right
 - (D) Center-aligned title and text, QR Code on the bottom left, contact information on the left, modified 'Serving Size' text
- See [slide](#) 60 for the results of the ranking poll that was delivered during the meeting

- Feedback discussed during the meeting or provided in the chat (+1 below indicates agreement of statement by another attendee):
 - Having the QR code on the left (next to OEHHA contact info) makes it seem like the QR Code will take you to information about OEHHA in general, not the specific advisory information +1 +1 +1
 - I like having the QR Code on the bottom because the placement of the posters near water bodies usually means folks will be closer to the QR Code if it's on the bottom of the poster
 - I like having the QR Code at the top because then it's clear it's referring to the whole advisory
 - I love the simplified hand for the serving size information
 - I really like C but I do like the simplified version of the serving size of D.
 - Placement of QR code in C was most intuitive for me, and I think some folks might appreciate the extra text re: serving size info. +1

Action Items

- Anna: Send poll results and chat feedback to OEHHA
- OEHHA: Incorporate feedback into future poster designs

Item 7. Wrap-up and Adjourn

Review action items & items for the next meeting.

Discussion

- See [slides](#) (61-68) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- No additional questions or discussion

Action Items

- Anna: complete the following, send to STEW email list once complete:
 - Post Jul 31 meeting materials and recording on the [Meetings page](#)
 - Post Jul 31 meeting notes on the [Meetings page](#)
- All:
 - Review the [Meetings page](#) and register for Zoom calls, download calendar invites.
 - Email anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov with future STEW meeting speaker/topic recommendations.

Upcoming STEW Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Focus (<i>Tentative</i>)	Meeting Documents
Oct. 30, 2024 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT	Regular STEW Meeting Presentation of FINAL long-term & 2025 monitoring plans	Registration Link