



**California Wetland
Monitoring Workgroup**
(CWMW)
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
9:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
August 7, 2018
Dept. of Water Resources
3500 Industrial Blvd
West Sacramento, CA 95691



In Attendance

Josh Collins, San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI)*
Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon, Delta Conservancy*
Tony Hale, SFEI
Christina Grosso, SFEI
Hilde Spautz, Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW)
Kris Jones, Natural Resources Agency, Monitoring Council Co-Director

Beth Payne, State Water Board
Cliff Harvey, State Water Board
Leslie Hamamoto, Div. of Environmental Services, Dept. of Water Resources (DWR)
Sakura Evans, DFW San Francisco Bay Region

By telephone/webcast:
Sam Ziegler, US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
Melissa Scianni, USEPA*
Leana Rosetti, USEPA
Chris Gurney, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (MFWF)

Elaine Blok, US Fish and Wildlife Service/National Wetland Inventory
Kevin O'Connor, Moss Landing Marine Labs
Karina Johnston (affiliation not recorded)
Krystal Bell, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Xavier Fernandez, San Francisco Bay RWQCB

*Co-chairs

Review of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the February and May, 2018 meetings were approved by assent of all in attendance, with clarification of one item: Kris Jones will report on the state Wetland Program Plan and the May 1 discussion of that topic to the Water Quality Monitoring Council.

Level 1 Committee and Formation

(Josh Collins, Shakoora Azimi-Gaylon, and Christina Grosso): Establishment of a Level 1 Committee is a long-standing priority for CWMW, but has proven to be an elusive goal. New and emerging opportunities to reach this goal were discussed.

- Delta Conservancy and DWR are funded to conduct mapping in the Delta. DWR and Delta Conservancy are discussing about how to coordinate these efforts.

SFEI is mapping Delta agricultural lands through Delta Aquatic Resource Inventory (DARI).

- The DARI workgroup has met once, with representatives from the Delta Conservancy and DWR efforts. Focus so far has been to compile existing mapping data. Data quality assurance will be the next topic of discussion. Meetings will be held quarterly for the duration of the Delta Conservancy grant. The next meeting is scheduled for October, 2018. This workgroup may serve as the beginnings of a Level 1 Committee.
- DWR continues as the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) steward for CA.
- SFEI is working to complete the California Aquatic Resource Inventory (CARI) Standard Operating Procedure, to be shared with partners. It was noted that a major difference between CARI and NWI/NHD is that CARI allows for mapping at different scales across the state. NHD/NWI requires mapping be done at the same scale everywhere. But mapping at different scales allow for the map to be developed as needed and funding availability. CARI may be more useful to local agencies and managers for this type of mapping in the Delta because it is more detailed.
- Involvement of vector control agencies/mosquito abatement districts might be desirable.

These groups and projects working on the Delta mapping efforts may provide the start of an L1 committee.

ACTION ITEM: Josh and Shakoora will develop a preliminary L1 strategy with input from the DARI workgroup.

EcoAtlas Business Plan and Related Updates

(Tony Hale, Christina Grosso): The EcoAtlas Business Plan was completed last year and endorsed by the WQMC. Outreach by CWMW has continued:

- The co-chairs meet with the Strategic Growth Council last February. There have several follow up meetings with the Office of Planning & Research. Considering working with the Climate Action Teams.
- SFEI discussed funding with the Division of Water Quality and Office of Information Management & Analysis.
- The [Cal-Adapt tool](https://cal-adapt.org/) (<https://cal-adapt.org/>) now receives \$250,000.00/year from the California Energy Commission (CEC) pursuant to an approved budget change proposal (BCP); the approved BCP ensures that this allocation is part of the ongoing, year-to-year budget at CEC. Due to this BCP example, the workgroup suggested developing a pitch paper for EcoAtlas that focuses on using the toolset to track and forecast climate change adaptation (e.g., where habitat restoration might be performed/scenario planning). Since EcoAtlas can serve federal, state, regional and local agencies/programs, the workgroup recommended following-up with Mike McCormick and the state Climate Action Team. The estimated operation and maintenance costs for EcoAtlas are \$400,000.00/year.
- SFEI has started publishing an EcoAtlas newsletter.
- Several watershed specific tools/efforts are underway, including Coyote Creek Restoration Tool with Santa Clara Valley Water District and Russian River watershed fire response. CWMW and Council can provide point of collaboration and integration of the tools across the state. We can't expect individual watershed groups to do that

collaboration on their own. We don't want to keep proliferating customized tools. We should focus on coordinating with interagency watershed/regional groups and not individual entities.

- Delta Science Council wants to stop using Delta View and is looking for other platforms to track information. Delta Conservancy is working with them to identify user needs for tracking science in the Delta. EcoAtlas may provide a platform for them.

Next steps: SFEI will conduct additional meetings with State Water Board (OIMA), develop a business plan 1-page summary sheet, and meet with Office of Planning & Research/Climate Action Teams.

Mitigation Tools

- Under a USEPA grant, pilot projects will be developed to demonstrate how the EcoAtlas tools can be used for compensatory mitigation planning and development. A work group will be formed to provide advice to this effort.

EcoAtlas Project Types

- Current EcoAtlas terminology is not consistent with Clean Water Act section 404/401, and Porter-Cologne regulatory definitions. Some projects previously recorded as "restoration" projects were actually projects that did not restore lost functions through re-establishment or rehabilitation. e.g., projects that enhance existing functions or add to existing functions are classes as "enhancement," not "restoration." Revisions to EcoAtlas definitions were discussed and recommended:
 - *Creation*: revise to include establishment.
 - Add *rehabilitation* and *re-establishment* as separate categories of restoration, with the word *restoration* added as a clarifying term. *Rehabilitation restoration* and *re-establishment restoration* are thus added as two separate classes of restoration work. Restoration continues to mean projects that restore a wetland function that has been lost due to natural or human-caused change.
 - Enhancement will continue as a separate definition.
 - Some restoration projects already recorded in EcoAtlas for which it is not possible to determine whether they increased area and function or just function. This will be classified as "unspecified restoration" and only show them in the "restoration" summary.

SFEI and Delta Conservancy have had meetings with several agencies regarding their reporting needs. It is noted that inconsistent classification across agencies and programs creates inconsistent data; e.g., the joint ventures use wetland classes that are not consistent with Clean Water Act section 404 and state CWA section 401 permitting practices.

Updates were made to EcoAtlas to display performance measures for projects under the Delta Plan.

ACTION ITEMS: Cristina Grosso and Melissa Scianni will finalize the definitions and do outreach to EcoAtlas users that don't participate in CWMW. The finale definitions will be provided to CWMW for approval either via email or at the November meeting. Josh Collins will encourage the Joint Ventures to use 404/401 classifications.

Performance Measure Tracking

(Tony Hale, Christina Grosso) SFEI and Delta Conservancy have had meetings with several agencies regarding their reporting needs, and how those needs could be served via EcoAtlas. Updates were made to EcoAtlas to display performance measures for projects under the Delta Plan.

ACTION: Josh Collins will report back to CWMW on progress with this item at the next meeting.

WRAMP Implementation

(Josh Collins, Cristina Grosso): Many ongoing and upcoming projects have been identified for which CWMW-recommended tools and methods could be beneficial. These opportunities for CWMW collaboration include groups for which we have at least some degree of ongoing collaboration:

- Southern California Recovery Plan monitoring efforts
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) basin monitoring plan and Sierra Meadows Group
- Delta Science Agenda/EcoRestore
- Santa Clara Valley Water District ambient surveys
- SF Bay Regional Wetland monitoring program

Opportunities for new collaborations include:

- Russian River watershed monitoring program
 - Klamath River regional monitoring program
 - Puget Sound (Josh notes that there is interest in bringing Project Tracker to the Sound)
- The next EPA Wetlands Grant RFP will be coming out early next year. CWMW members should consider what projects might benefit from grant money. SFEI also considering applying to EPA HQ for a wetland grant to work on Project Tracker with CA, WA, and OR.

ACTION ITEMS: Melissa Scianni will follow up with Cliff Harvey and Sarah Pearce (SFEI) about the monitoring being conducted by the Sierra Meadows Group and how it compares to the monitoring being developed by TRPA. Josh will reach out to SCWRP and Russian River to see if they would benefit from additional CWMW collaboration.

Water Quality Monitoring Council Update

A subcommittee has been established to develop an updated Council strategy to be discussed at the Sept 5 Council meeting. Josh Collins will serve on that subcommittee.

- AB1755 (Open and Transparent Water Data Act) overlaps with the Council mandate, especially regarding data access. Council has decided to leave data access mostly to AB1755, and instead focus on coordination, except when AB1755 does not adequately address certain aquatic habitat types.
- Preliminary Top 5 areas for Council focus are expected to be: (1) evaluate whether monitoring programs are designed and implemented to answer management questions, (2) offer guidance on data quality and method consistency across

programs, (3) offer guidance for data interpretation thresholds, (4) encourage development and implementation guidance for emerging methods and technologies, and (5) coordinate local and regional monitoring efforts.

- Many of these focus areas cut across theme specific workgroups.
- To what extent will the updated Council strategy affect workgroup priorities and efforts? This is still being discussed by the strategy subcommittee. For example, some workgroups have been more focused on data access rather than coordination. With the new Council strategy, do these workgroups need to change their focus? Hopefully, the new strategy will not affect CWMW priorities. We can demonstrate how our work relates to the new Council priorities.
- Council has not explicitly discussed workgroup portals, but they will probably be less of a focus.
- No time horizon for the new strategy has been identified.

ACTION ITEM: (All): CWMW will continue to observe the Council's strategy development process and seek to demonstrate how the CWMW's work relates to the new Council priorities. (Josh): Draft CWMW priorities talking points for the September 5 Council discussion of the strategy update. The co-chairs will provide the talking points to CWMW for input prior to September 5.

Level 2 Assessments Committee Update

- L2 quarterly report will be sent to CWMW shortly, to be attached to these minutes.
- The Draft Technical Bulletin is expected to be ready for CWMW at the November meeting.
- Funding to update eCRAM for the new Slope, Vernal Pool, and Depressional field books has still not been identified.
- Episodic stream module currently undergoing validation studies.
- SWAMP has concerns about putting all the PSA seasonal field team members through the 5-day course. They also have questions about eCRAM and it not being linked to CEDEN. Cliff and Melissa will be reaching out to Eric Stein and Pete Ode to better understand their concerns and identify solutions.
- L2 continues to recommend that there be at least two fully trained practitioners for each CRAM assessment.

ACTION ITEMS: Cliff will provide L2 report to CWMW. Cliff and Melissa will reach out to Pete Ode and Eric Stein regarding SWAMP concerns with CRAM.

Future Agenda Items

- EcoAtlas- funding, tool development, project type definitions (Josh/Tony/Cristina)- **November**
- WRAMP training approach (Josh/Kevin)
- DARI/L1 Committee Formation (Josh/Shakoora)- **November**
- State of the State's Wetlands Report (Chris)
- Tech Bulletin Review (Melissa)- **November**
- Bay Area RMP/Permitting Program Update (Josh/Jen)
- DEDUCE (Shakoora)
- State Board Dredge and Fill update (Ana)
- Performance Measure Reporting in EcoAtlas (Shakoora)

- eCRAM funding (Josh)

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.