



RMP Steering Committee Meeting

April 30th, 2012

San Francisco Estuary Institute

Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Dave Allen, Industry (USS POSCO)
Mike Connor, EBDA
Peter Carroll, Refineries (Tesoro Golden Eagle Refinery)
Napp Fukuda, Large POTWs (City of San Jose)
Tom Mumley, SFB RWQCB
Karin North, Small POTWs (City of Palo Alto)
Dan Tafolla, Medium POTWs (Vallejo Sanitation and Flood Control District)

Others Present:

Rachel Allen, SFEI
Jay Davis, SFEI
Alicia Gilbreath, SFEI
Cristina Grosso, SFEI
Lawrence Leung, SFEI
Lester McKee, SFEI
Meg Sedlak, SFEI

Via telephone:

Rob Lawrence, US Army Corps of Engineers

1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Tom Mumley performed introductions and reviewed the day's agenda. Meg Sedlak noted that Adam Olivieri, Trish Mulvey, and Kirsten Struve had provided comments on the January 2012 minutes, and that their comments were incorporated into the distributed version.

Following up on a discussion from the January meeting, Ms. Sedlak noted that the Copper Development Association (CDA) agreed to a grant for the additional work evaluating the effects of salinity on Salmonids' olfactory nerve. The NOAA proposal for this work will be reviewed at the Exposure and Effects meeting. Assuming it is approved, Ms. Sedlak will work with CDA to obtain these funds.

MOTION. Karin North made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the January 2012 SC meeting. **SECOND.** Napp Fukuda seconded. **APPROVAL.** All approved.

2) Committee Member Updates

Meg Sedlak noted that Rachel Allen will be leaving SFEI in July to begin graduate school at University of California -Berkeley. The Institute is bringing on two new RMP focused staff members: Emily Novick, a master's level engineer from UC Berkeley to work with David Senn on nutrients studies who will start in early June, and Ellen Willis-Norton, a recent graduate of Wellesley College, who will fill the RMP EA position starting in early September.

Tom Mumley noted that with Kirsten Struve leaving the City of San Jose and resigning from the SC, the SC needs a vice-chair. Napp Fukuda has taken on the role as BACWA representative to the SC, and Karin North has agreed to serve as acting vice-chair for the current meeting. An agenda item regarding filling the position of vice-chair will be added to the August 2012 meeting.

Action Items:

- Add an agenda item to the August 2012 SC meeting to discuss the position of vice-chair.

3) TRC Meeting Summary

Meg Sedlak noted that Greg Schellenbarger from USGS updated the TRC on studies on sediment flux to the South Bay at the March 2012 meeting. This presentation reminded the group how dependent Bay dynamics are on flow through the Delta. To date, results indicate that wetter years tend to result in the South Bay being more erosional whereas drier years tend to be more depositional. The RMP is waiting for publication of the third year of data (a wet year) before finalizing the factsheet on sediment flux to the South Bay, as the most recent data significantly changes the story of South Bay sediment dynamics.

4) Budget Status

Tom Mumley noted that he appreciated having the budget handouts ahead of the meeting.

Lawrence Leung reviewed the budget memo, noting that he is following up on receiving the remaining participant fees for 2012.

Meg Sedlak noted that she is requesting \$9,854 from the Unencumbered Funds in order to make the 2012 budget balance. The budget approved by the SC in January had a \$9854 shortfall as a result of discussions during the meeting, and this funding will reconcile the difference.

MOTION. Karin North made a motion to approve the use of \$9,854 from the reserve to balance the RMP 2012 budget. **SECOND.** Dan Tafolla seconded. **APPROVAL.** All approved.

Meg Sedlak also noted that funding was allocated in 2012 to develop a conceptual model of nutrient dynamics in the Bay. David Senn is putting together a group of local experts (including Mike Connor, Raphe Kudela, Jim Cloern, Wim Kimmerer, Dick Dugdale, Lisa Lucas, Mark Stacey, Jim Hollibaugh, and Anke Mueller-Solger) to help write this document, but not all of the contributors can do this work pro-bono. Therefore, Ms. Sedlak is requesting \$12,500 from the reserve (modified from the \$10,000 listed on the budget memo due to the addition of a fifth panel member) to cover honoraria for some of the participants.

Mike Connor asked how the rate of \$2,500 was determined. Meg Sedlak noted that this comes from an estimation of the time contribution from one of the participants who expressed a need for compensation in order to be able to contribute. Dr. Connor questioned whether all members had similar needs; however, because the members are being asked to write a report, the SC felt it was important to compensate these individuals for their time. The standard RMP workgroup honorarium is \$1,000 per year; however, the expected contribution from the nutrient participants significantly exceeds the standard RMP workgroup participation, and includes a written product. Karin North noted that the cost is nominal compared to the expected work product.

MOTION. Karin North made a motion to approve the use of \$12,500 from the reserve to cover the cost of an advisory panel for the nutrient conceptual model report. **SECOND.** Napp Fukuda seconded. **APPROVAL.** All approved.

Meg Sedlak noted that the RMP 2012 wet season sediment cruise was completed last week, and that the \$24,000 used to pay for the vessel was well spent. She also indicated that the 2012 USGS bird egg collection and analyses is approximately \$35,000 more expensive than in 2009 because USGS is now requesting overhead on their projects. Ms. Sedlak also indicated that the RMP has \$10,500 more revenue to cover the cost of collecting and analyzing a full sediment triad sample off of Point Richmond for EBMUD as part of a permit requirement.

5) Multi-Year Plan

As part of the multi-year planning effort, the SC decided to discuss an element of the RMP at each meeting. This meeting focused on the last two major areas remaining after the MYP workshop in fall of 2011: program management and data management.

a. Program Management

Meg Sedlak gave an overview of program management tasks and operations, and asked for input on ways to improve this element. Program management, contracts, and financials account for 16% of the RMP annual budget. Program management encompasses workgroup management, including 1-2 workgroup meetings each year for each workgroup, as well as program coordination, including quarterly TRC and SC meetings and annual CTAG-TRC meetings. Contracts and financials include managing participant fees, developing contracts, reviewing invoices, and developing and tracking budgets.

In an effort to improve the workgroups, Ms. Sedlak suggested that creating workgroup meeting agendas in collaboration with Water Board staff and interested stakeholders about 4 weeks in advance, assigning a timekeeper, drafting the minutes and action items within a week of the meeting, and considering having an external participant chair the meeting are all possibilities for improving workgroup meeting management. Tom Mumley noted that it is a challenge, as meeting facilitator, to balance the broad view of management questions with technical details. Meg Sedlak suggested that the choice of chair could be addressed workgroup by workgroup. Mike Connor suggested that SFEI invest in training staff in workgroup management, and Karin North had a recommendation for a good meeting facilitation training program. She also noted that inviting RMP stakeholders to this training may improve meeting productiveness as well.

Meg Sedlak indicated that the RMP is intending to better articulate coordination efforts among the RMP and other organizations. Tom Mumley asked that RMP staff compile a list of efforts that are important for the RMP to be aware of and to include this in the Multi-Year Plan. Karin North suggested adding it to the workgroup update as “Items of Interest”.

Meg Sedlak also pointed out the new version of the deliverables scorecard, noting that a “stoplight” was added to denote projects that are on schedule (green), delayed but not of concern (yellow), delayed and need review by the SC (red), and completed (black). She reviewed the projects denoted as red and outlined updated and reasonable plans to complete them. The Benthic Index report, completed in 2009 by Aroon Melwani, is nearly complete, however it was delayed pending a gold standard workshop to develop a mesohaline index. Ms. Sedlak noted that this is not a reasonable expectation, as the RMP’s plans regarding a mesohaline index are not set, and there is no remaining budget in the report. Therefore, she proposed finalizing the report as it is, and making use of it to the extent possible in developing future plans for a mesohaline index. Jay Davis noted that the EEWG needs to weigh in on this plan, especially Karen Taberski and Mike Kellogg. Tom Mumley indicated that he supports getting closure on this project in this way. Tom Mumley also noted that he does not envision using SQO tools to make regulatory decisions, and that a future meeting should include discussion on how to continue to pursue SQOs within the RMP. The AXYS Mussel Watch CEC manuscript is marked with a red stoplight, but it is recently completed. Mike Connor asked that the final draft be distributed to the SC. Jay Davis indicated that the bird egg report has not been a high priority, but that he will have an outline and schedule for completion prepared by the August SC meeting. He committed to completing a draft by October 1, 2012 and the final by January 1, 2013.

Tom Mumley noted that he likes the new deliverables tracking format, and asked that items denoted with a yellow stoplight have comments that detail a plan to deal with the issues. Karin North suggested that a star (green, yellow, or red) be used to denote items that need a decision or action item from the SC, and the filled circle denote items that do not need to be addressed.

Action Items:

- Work with Tom Mumley and Karin North to develop a meeting facilitation training for SFEI staff and invite RMP stakeholders.
- Compile a list of relevant projects to the RMP that are important for the SC and TRC to be aware of, and include it in the workgroup update and Multi-Year Plan.

- Jay Davis and Tom Mumley will discuss the plan for finalizing the Benthic Index report with Mike Kellogg and Karen Taberski, respectively.
- Distribute the final AXYS Mussel Watch CEC manuscript to the SC.
- Jay Davis will prepare an outline and schedule for completion of the bird egg report by the August SC meeting.

b. Data Management

Cristina Grosso gave an overview of data management within the RMP and the broader structure of the Environmental Data, Information, and Technology team at SFEI. She has been tracking the timeliness of data submission from analytical labs since 2000, and noted that all labs are aiming for full data submission within 160 days of sample receipt. Jay Davis indicated that SFEI staff would bring any data issues needing action to the SC in the future.

Cristina Grosso also presented the RMP Contaminant Data, Display, and Download (CD3) online contaminant data query tool (formerly referred to as the web query tool). She noted that future initiatives include adding automated kriging maps to the CD3, as well as more summary statistics. Jay Davis suggested adding the flexible polygon functionality, currently employed in the Wetland Tracker tool, to the CD3. Mike Connor suggested that land use and watershed data from the Watersheds team would also be beneficial for the CD3. Peter Carroll noted that the refineries will be collecting nutrients data starting in July, and requested a meeting with Cristina to discuss the format of data submission. Karin North suggested that Cristina come to a BACWA lab committee meeting, to help disseminate information to the discharger labs about data formatting.

Action Items:

- SFEI staff will bring any data issues needing action to the SC in the future.
- Cristina Grosso, David Senn, and Peter Carroll will discuss the format of data submission for the July nutrients data collection.
- Cristina Grosso will meet with BACWA discharger labs about data formatting.

c. Guidance to Workgroups

Jay Davis noted that the workgroup meetings are coming up, where the teams will make recommendations to the TRC and SC for studies to fund. These recommendations should be largely based on the guidance from the SC as outlined in the Multi-Year Plan; however the workgroups are also free to propose studies that may be of interest to the RMP beyond the guidance from the SC. Jay Davis reviewed the funding allotments for 2013 as shown on page 11 of the MYP. Tom Mumley noted that currently more than \$110,000 of 2013 funds, as well as \$175,000 in unencumbered funds, is unallocated. He also indicated that some of the 2012 studies, such as developing a benthic assessment tool, need committed proposals and funding, or the funding should be made available for 2013.

Tom Mumley noted that he is comfortable with the existing guidance to the workgroups. Karin North asked that the state of the 2013 budget be made clear to the workgroups, so that they are aware of the potential for funding in addition to the allotment listed in the MYP.

Action Items:

- Jay Davis will communicate the guidance from the SC to the workgroups during the proposal development process, and make them aware of the possibility of additional funding for other timely, RMP appropriate projects.

6) Communications

RMP Update 2012

Jay Davis reviewed the outline for the “RMP Update 2012”. It will include sections on an introduction to the RMP, updates on priority topics (mainly based on the MYP), and trends at a glance. Adam Olivieri sent comments to Jay on the outline, suggesting that the budget need not be included. Jay Davis indicated that including the budget helps to distinguish this RMP Update, which will focus on the RMP as a program, like an Annual Report, from the traditional Pulse, which focuses on the Bay.

Peter Carroll asked why selenium was not included as a “priority topic”. Jay Davis indicated that there are currently no RMP studies focused on selenium, however Mike Connor suggested that selenium also merits 2 pages in the RMP Update. Mike Connor also suggested that communications, data management, and program management could be eliminated or combined with the budget and condensed to 2 pages on “internal workings”.

Mike Connor suggested that some of the Trends at a Glance figures, like population, may not have new information every year, and therefore would not need to be included in each iteration. He also suggested that the BOG coastal mercury data would be interesting to include. Tom Mumley asked if the “Latest Monitoring Results” section would be skipped. Jay Davis indicated that the section will not be included but that many of the contaminant results maps would be included in the “priority topics” section where appropriate. In order to provide relevant and timely review, Mike Connor suggested that time be devoted to review and commenting on the draft RMP Update at the June 29th TRC meeting.

Communications Survey

Jay Davis presented a draft for an online survey for RMP stakeholders regarding communication within the RMP. He specifically asked the SC for help identifying the relevant members of their constituencies to participate in the survey. Karin North provided input to the draft survey, and noted that her goal was to keep the survey short enough that it was easy to provide input. Peter Carroll asked if the questions as written would help Jay make a decision about the next course of action.

Mike Connor asked if survey participants would provide responses anonymously. Jay Davis indicated that he was interested in matching at least participant position and organization with their responses, but that he was open to other options. The group discussed various options for anonymous participation in the survey. Peter Carroll indicated that he would mention the survey at the next Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA) meeting. Karin indicated that she would bring it up with the BACWA group and Tom Mumley indicated that he could orchestrate the response of Water Board staff. Jay Davis indicated that he would revise the survey, and distribute the next draft along with a preliminary list of targeted participants to the SC members. They will be able to edit and modify both the survey and the list.

Action Items:

- Revise the RMP Update outline:
 - Add selenium to the “Priority Topics”.
 - Reduce the number of pages on RMP internal workings to 2 or less.
 - Consider revising the “Trends at a Glance” figures to emphasize areas with changing information and updated data.
 - Add a section on the BOG mercury results, if possible.
- Include review of the RMP Update as a major agenda item at the June 29 TRC meeting.
- Jay Davis will revise the communications survey, and distribute the next draft along with a preliminary list of targeted participants to the SC members, who will add to the list.

7) Focus on Workgroups: Sources, Pathways, and Loadings

In 2012, the RMP budget for the Sources, Pathways, and Loadings Workgroup is \$428,000, all of which is used for studies to support the Small Tributaries Loadings Strategy (STLS). The majority of the funds (\$328,000) is dedicated to Pollutants of Concern (POC) loads monitoring, with \$20,000 and \$80,000 allocated to continued development of the regional watershed spreadsheet model (RWSM) and event mean concentration (EMC) development, respectively.

The two watersheds funded by the RMP are part of the Municipal Regional Permit requirements to monitor four watersheds throughout the Bay, four storms a year for three years. The RMP sites (Sunnyvale East Channel and San Leandro Creek) are set up using automated samplers and manual collection. As of 30th April, 2012, four storms have been monitored at San Leandro Creek, and two storms have been monitored at Sunnyvale Channel.

The Regional Watershed Spreadsheet Model (RWSM) aims to improve annual loads estimates to the Bay by using spatial information on annual runoff volume, contaminant concentration by land use, and source area concentrations to compute watershed scale loads. A 9-step process is used to develop each contaminant within the model. It includes developing a factsheet on each contaminant, developing the GIS layers, developing, running, and modifying the model, and packaging it for future use by other users. To date, the base hydrology layer is reasonably accurate across all watersheds, but not very precise. Various other parameters, such as suspended sediment and copper, are at different stages of development. For PCBs and mercury, the event mean concentration (EMC) development funding is being used to back-calculate EMCs of PCB and mercury loads based on land use type, utilizing loads data from the WY2011 16 watershed reconnaissance study.

Lester McKee noted that the strength of this approach will be in how the different pieces work together. At the conclusion of the project, there will be a significant reconciliation effort, at which point the development team, SPLWG, and SC will be able to assess if it is worth continuing to develop the model. Karin North asked what was included in the factsheets and Lester McKee noted that they are designed to provide hypotheses about contaminant behavior relevant to land use. Karin North noted that this differs from the traditional meaning of the term “factsheet”, and recommended that these documents be called a “summary document linking land use and contaminants”.

8) RMP Annual Meeting

Jay Davis reviewed the draft agenda for the RMP Annual Meeting. This year's theme is "RMP Update", and is therefore a hodgepodge of different topics by design. He asked for input from the SC on how to include more of a management perspective, and for recommendations of other interesting topics.

Tom Mumley suggested that highlighting modeling in a keynote speech would help to give direction to the meeting. Karin North noted that modeling talks are occasionally dry, especially if they focus on methods, and suggested that the speaker selected focus on results and presentation to keep the audience interested. She suggested that Joel Baker might be able to give an interesting key note speech on modeling, and the remainder of the morning could focus on modeling. Frank Gobas and Dick Dugdale could also provide interesting talks focused on modeling.

Regarding nutrients, Mike Connor suggested that Bill Dennison would make a good keynote speaker. He has worked extensively developing appropriate metrics for assessing conditions of estuaries such as the Chesapeake Bay and is a very good speaker. Mike Connor suggested that Lisa Lucas could unite the modeling and nutrients components by presenting on nutrients modeling work that is underway in the Delta. This could be followed by David Senn, on nutrients in the Bay, Mike Stenstrom, on watershed modeling, and Jim Cloern on the long-term climate model (CASCADE). Jay Davis noted that the RMP may hold a modeling focused workshop near the end of 2012, however, so the two meetings should not overlap in content too much.

Regarding other topics, Mike Connor suggested that the Emerging Contaminants topic could focus on recycled water, to set the stage for the 2013 meeting on Emerging Contaminants. He also suggested that Lester McKee and Richard Looker could both speak on the Municipal Regional Permit in order to provide more of a management perspective. Karin North suggested adding collaborating researchers from Stanford or UC-Berkeley, and Meg Sedlak noted that Chris Francis' lab is currently working on nitrification and denitrification processes in the Bay.

Jay Davis, Karin North, and Tom Mumley agreed to meet at a later date to come up with additional ideas and create a new draft agenda. This will be distributed to the SC, and followed with a conference call to get input from all SC members.

Action Items:

- Jay Davis, Karin North, and Tom Mumley will create a new draft RMP Annual Meeting agenda.
- The SC will hold a conference call to provide input on the new draft agenda.

9) CTAG-TRC Meeting Update

Meg Sedlak noted that SFEI staff continue to benefit greatly from the annual CTAG-TRC meetings, but in recent years the meetings have not been well attended by TRC members. She proposed having the meeting be a joint SFEI-SCCWRP meeting. The TRC and SC will continue to be invited, but SFEI will host, and potentially bring in a larger group, including the SFEI board. Mike Connor noted that this sounded like an appropriate modification.

10) Web tool for uploading WWTP metals data

Per a request from the SC for a web-based tool for submitting metals loading data from the wastewater treatment plans, Meg Sedlak and Jeff Mueller, the SFEI web designer, developed a prototype. Meg Sedlak demonstrated the tool, and the SC generally approved of its functionality. They noted that the WWTP managers need to be well informed of its existence and about how to use it, and suggested getting in touch with Jim Kelley, the current BACWA Executive Director, to include it in the BACWA newsletter.

Action Items:

- Lawrence Leung will get in touch with Jim Kelley about putting the new metals upload tool in the BACWA newsletter.

11) Wrap Up and Plus/Delta

Tom Mumley reviewed the items for the August 6th SC meeting, which include continued MYP planning, discussion of the Annual Meeting, approval of the recommended special studies for 2013, and a report from the SFEI financial audit. Meg Sedlak noted that in keeping with best management practices, SFEI is changing its auditor, so she is not sure if the audit will be completed by this time. Tom Mumley noted that the typical schedule would include a discussion of fees for 2014, but the fees were agreed to for the next 3 years, so this issue does not need to be discussed. The agenda should also include a discussion of the SC vice-chair.

Karin North and Tom Mumley suggested that with the upcoming ECWG and EEWG meeting and imminent completion of the EC synthesis, the SC should hear from the ECWG as the next workgroup update. They also asked for an update on deliverables tracking as well as a chance to discuss external projects of interest to the RMP.

As a plus/delta, Peter Carroll noted that the meeting covered a wide range of topics well, and managed to conclude on time. Tom Mumley indicated that it was worth committing to the longer meeting, and appreciated the increased effort to plan the meetings and get materials sent out ahead of time.