

**REGIONAL MONITORING PROGRAM FOR WATER QUALITY
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES
October 21, 2008**

Members Present:

Dave Allen, USS POSCO/Industry
Kevin Buchan, WSPA/Refineries
Bob Hale, Alameda County Clean Water Program
Ellen Johnck, Bay Planning Coalition
Mike Kellogg, City and County of San Francisco, TRC representative
Adam Olivieri, EOA/BASMAA
Dan Tafolla, Vallejo Sanitation and Flood Control District/Med. WWTPs
Dave Tucker, City of San Jose/Large WWTPs
Tom Mumley, SFB RWQCB

Others Present:

Mike Connor, SFEI
Jay Davis, SFEI
Lawrence Leung, SFEI
Meg Sedlak, SFEI

1. Approval of Agenda and SC Minutes

Kevin Buchan opened the meeting and asked for comments on the August 2008 minutes. Because the minutes were sent out late, several committee members requested that the minutes be approved at the January 2009 meeting.

2. Committee Member Updates

There were no committee member updates.

3. Information: Technical Review Committee (TRC) Meeting Summary

Ms. Sedlak apologized to the committee that the TRC minutes from October 2nd were unavailable and indicated that she anticipated disseminating them to the group in the next week.

Ms. Sedlak indicated that many of the day's agenda items were discussed at the TRC meeting including: the RMP Master Plan; the Dioxin Strategy; and the Program Plan. Andy Cohen gave a brief update at the TRC meeting on the invasive oyster project. Dr. Cohen thanked the TRC for the funding the project. The funding was critical in getting a group of volunteers out to characterize the extent of the invasive of oyster. He explained that a number of organizations have subsequently contributed funding to the project.

Dr. Cohen indicated that two areas of the Bay appear to have the invasive oyster: in the South Bay near the Dumbarton Bridge and in an area near the Loch Lomond Marina. The marina site appears to be an illegal bed of transplanted oysters. Based on a visual inspection of the shells of the two colonies, it appears that these two colonies may have different origins. The oysters from

the South Bay are broader and flatter than *C. gigas* typically is. Dr. Cohen has sent the oysters off to be aged and to be genetically characterized. He is waiting for the results.

Meg Sedlak indicated that the RMP was originally planning on collecting sediments in the winter to begin to characterize the effects of wet weather on toxicity to amphipods and development of bivalve larvae. However, Dr. Don Stevens of Oregon State University who developed the statistical sampling plan suggested that it may be better for the statistical design if this commences in 2010.

Lastly, Ms. Sedlak stated that based on the bivalve intercomparison exercise between California Department of Fish and Game and AXYS Analytical, the RMP will be switching to AXYS to conduct bivalve analyses. AXYS has lower detection limits and is able to get all of the PBDE congeners.

4. Information: Budget Status

Ms. Sedlak reviewed the RMP budget summary memorandum. For 2008, all participants have been invoiced and with the exception of the Caltrans fees (\$73,110), all have been paid. Ms. Sedlak indicated that the prior year's fees from Caltrans totaling \$175,717 have also not been paid. Region 2 had sent a contract to the State Board for signing (*after the meeting it was determined that the contract could not be implemented and a new scope of work will need to be developed*). Ms. Sedlak is continuing to work with the Water Board staff to obtain this funding. Labor costs for 2009 are on target. Direct costs were slightly higher as a result of a number of unforeseen costs such as the extra days required for Status and Trends cruise.

Ms. Sedlak also indicated that based on an intercomparison exercise with California Department of Fish and Game and AXYS that AXYS was able to achieve lower detection limits and identify more congeners. As a result, funding that was set aside in 2006 for the analysis of bivalves will now be released to analyze the 2006 samples.

5. Discussion: Development of a Master Plan

Jay Davis presented the outline of the RMP Master Plan which was included in the agenda package. He explained that not as much progress had been made on the Master Plan as a result of the intensive (and productive) discussions on strategies for watershed loading, modeling, and dioxin. Five strategies will be included in the Master Plan: mercury (completed); dioxin (completed); small tributary loading (to be completed by end of year); modeling (to be completed by end of the year); and PCBs (schedule to be determined).

Jay indicated that potentially a sixth strategy will be included, sediment toxicity. The need for this strategy will be discussed at the November 6th Toxicity workgroup meeting (a subcommittee of the Exposure and Effects workgroup). Tom Mumley liked the idea of having a strategy for addressing sediment toxicity monitoring. Tom reminded the group that there were a number of challenges with the Sediment Quality Objectives (SQOs), technical as well as regulatory and political. Interpreting the results of the SQOs and providing a context for the results will be important.

Dave Tucker asked what the SCCWRP SQO assessment had shown for SF Bay. Jay indicated that for comparable sediment chemistry results SF Bay showed more toxicity. Jay commented that toxicity in the Bay can be ephemeral and determining the cause can be a challenge. As an example, he noted that the recent causes of toxicity study had surveyed 12 locations in SF Bay that had been identified as being likely to exhibit toxicity and found only one of them toxic enough to perform a TIE and that the agents identified as causing the toxicity were not well understood (organics/mixtures).

The Committee recommended that a one-day meeting be convened to develop a PCB strategy. The Committee thought that it was likely that the RMP was on track with regard to PCBs; however, it would be prudent to do a one-day check-up. Dave Tucker noted that recent effluent PCB results from the City of San Jose suggested that the RMP may be missing several significant congeners. (The RMP reports 40 of the most prominent congeners identified in the Bay.) Jay requested that if possible, Dave forward his data or at least identify the congeners that are prominent. Jay also mentioned that within the fish community there is a desire to have more congener data.

Tom Mumley commented that the strategies were a way to confirm the relevancy of the Program. He also asked whether we needed a strategy for emerging contaminants. Jay indicated that this is being addressed as part of the Emerging Contaminants Workgroup five-year plan.

Jay asked for input on regulatory and information needs. He indicated that he had received a simple but valuable one-page document from Dave Tucker outlining BACWA's needs. Kevin Buchan indicated that he had discussed the information needs that BACWA had identified with the refineries and they felt that Dave had adequately captured their information needs. Karen Taberski from the Water Board had identified the Water Board needs in a document that was prepared and circulated to the TRC in 2005. Jay thought the document would need some updating. Adam Olivieri indicated that he would follow up with BASMAA.

Tom Mumley indicated that he would be happy to meet with Jay to outline future regulatory developments. Ellen Johnck suggested that it might be useful to have the State Board involved as they had indicated an interest in being involved in Bay issues. Ellen also indicated that the critical coastal areas for green sturgeon are scheduled for adoption in June 2009. Ellen also indicated that the LTMS is going to be reconsidered in the next six months to place greater emphasis on keeping sediment in the Bay, given the Bay's sediment deficit. She also thought it would be important to have the RMP involved in the LTMS discussions. Tom Mumley noted that a sediment management strategy is bigger than the RMP, but RMP involvement is needed – sediment transport and modeling and contaminant transport and modeling go hand in hand.

Jay stated that he would like to have the information needs for each sector by early January.

Action item: Follow up with Dave Tucker on the PCB congeners that the City of San Jose is observing. Obtain input from BASMAA and the dredging community. Schedule a meeting with Tom Mumley to identify future regulatory milestones.

6. Action: Approval of 2009 Program Plan

Ms. Sedlak presented a short overview of the 2009 program plan. The plan was approved without modification.

7. Action: Theme for 2009 Pulse

Jay Davis summarized the results of the interactive display at the Annual Meeting for future themes. The most popular theme was pollutants pathways followed by emerging contaminants, sediment issues, Bay water quality and human health, and wetland restoration. A discussion ensued about what RMP products would be completed in time for the 2009 meeting. Jay suggested that the 2009 Pulse could focus on sediment and could include articles on the following topics: Sediment Quality Objectives (SQOs), the RMP coring project (Yee), decreasing sediment loads (Schoellhamer), changes in bathymetry (Jaffe), contamination at the Bay margin and sediment budget/needs. Ellen Johnck indicated that the USGS has strict guidance on the release of material and it might not be possible to have Dave Schoellhamer write an article in time for the Pulse. She also volunteered to write an article on sediment needs.

Tom Mumley commented that the bathymetry story might be a little old for the Pulse; however, it was noted that additional bathymetry work was conducted in the South Bay as part of the South Bay salt pond restoration. Tom indicated that he and Richard Looker could write an article on SQOs and other regulatory developments related to PCBs and mercury.

Kevin Buchan identified Chris Beegan as a potential author for the SQO article as he has conducted substantial outreach on this issue and probably has already written something that could be used in the Pulse.

It was suggested that emerging contaminants could be the focus for the Pulse in 2010. Tom Mumley asked where the RMP was going with emerging contaminants and what was the significance of these constituents.

Tom Mumley thought that wetland restoration could be linked to a narrative on how wetlands affect Bay water quality.

Ellen Johnck asked that the LTMS strategy for science be considered as sediment issues are discussed in the RMP.

Dave Tucker and others liked the idea of pathways as a theme for a future Pulse.

Tom Mumley motioned for approval of a 2009 Pulse that focused on sediment. Kevin Buchan seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Action item: Contact potential authors for the 2009 Pulse.

8. Action: Dioxin Strategy

Susan Klosterhaus provided an update on the Dioxin Strategy meeting that was held September 18th. She reviewed the study questions, study design elements, and budget. The RMP is seeking input and approval of the strategy so work can begin. Funding for 2008 and 2009 work will come from unallocated reserves.

Tom Mumley reminded that the group that the RMP dioxin strategy is a starting point and that this issue is much bigger than the RMP. He indicated that there was a dearth of information on dioxin in the Bay.

Part of the driver for addressing dioxins now is that several of the NPDES permits are being revised to include dioxin.

Kevin Buchan made a motion made to pay for dioxin strategy through unallocated reserves. Dave Tucker seconded and the motion passed unanimously. A suggestion was made to examine potential funding for this issue at the January SC meeting.

9. Discussion: Annual Meeting

Meg Sedlak briefly summarized the annual meeting survey results and noted that they were very similar to the results for the dot voting poster that Jay had discussed earlier in the day.

10. Action: Annual Mercury Meeting

In the interest of time, this issue was not discussed at the meeting. However, Meg Sedlak requested comments from the SC on the agenda that was included in the agenda package.

11. Action: Description of Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair

A memorandum was prepared describing the roles and responsibilities of the Chair. Tom Mumley requested minor language changes of the document. Pending these changes, the memorandum was motioned for approval by Ellen Johnck and seconded by Dave Tucker. It passed unanimously. The SC asked the TRC also receive and review the memorandum.

12. Information: Program Update

Ms. Sedlak noted that a number of workgroup meetings were scheduled in the next couple of months

Next meeting is scheduled for 27th of January.