

**REGIONAL MONITORING PROGRAM FOR WATER QUALITY  
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

**Members Present:**

Dave Allen, USS POSCO/Industry  
Kevin Buchan, WSPA/Refineries  
Adam Olivieri, EOA/Stormwater Agencies  
Dan Tafolla, Vallejo Sanitation and Flood Control District/Med. POTWs  
Chuck Weir, EBDA/Large POTWs  
Tom Mumley, SFB RWQCB

**Others Present:**

Mike Connor, SFEI  
Meg Sedlak, SFEI

**1. Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

Kevin Buchan opened the meeting and asked for comments on the January 2007 minutes. Kevin Buchan motioned that the minutes be approved; Adam Olivieri seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Meg Sedlak briefly outlined the status of several action items from the January meeting. Ms. Sedlak indicated that a review of the attendees of the annual meeting had been conducted to determine whether the meeting location should be moved. Based on the review, it appears that some of the small dischargers from the North Bay are not attending but in general there was no systematic bias. The SC indicated that they were satisfied with the current meeting location.

**2. Committee Member Updates**

There were no Committee member updates.

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

Meg Sedlak summarized the minutes from the TRC meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The major items were: finalization of the redesign of the Status and Trends (S&T) program; a discussion of the wet weather sampling; an update on the sediment coring project; and approval of the UCSC mercury study. The redesign meeting is discussed as a separate agenda item.

A meeting to discuss seasonal variation of the chemical data was held on January 17<sup>th</sup>. The attendees at the meeting concluded that although wet season concentrations of metals are more variable, the metals are generally below guideline levels. In addition, it was concluded that there was substantial variation in the weather and therefore, it would be difficult to choose one event that would represent the entire spectrum of conditions. The RWQCB has not yet made a decision regarding wet season sampling (including the

frequency of this event). The TMDL and permitting section leads are currently discussing their data needs.

Don Yee gave a short update on the coring project. The cores are currently being radio-dated by USC. An opportunity to obtain additional funding was discussed as a separate agenda item later in the day.

The TRC approved the mercury study by UCSC to investigate sample handling, effects of extraction methods and the reactivity of mercury in sediments.

#### **4. Information: Budget Status**

Ms. Sedlak reviewed the RMP budget summary memorandum. At present, unpaid fees from 2007 are \$449,744 (e.g., San Mateo stormwater \$79,000; Caltrans stormwater \$72,000; Port of San Francisco (\$79,000); and Port of Oakland (\$42,000)).

Approximately \$16,000 of the fees was written off.

Approximately 23 percent of the labor budget has been expended (i.e., \$308,663 out of an approved budget of \$1,355,620). Approximately half of the subcontracts have been written (\$709,415 out of an allocated budget of \$1,610,120). The major contracts to be written include those associated with the Status and Trends element. Approximately 20 percent of the direct costs have been spent (\$28,417 out of a total of \$133,150) largely due to costs incurred with the Hayward Zone 4 line A project (\$22,623).

Approximately \$112,300 of funding for 2007 was not allocated at the time the budget was approved in January. A request was made to the Steering Committee to allocate \$69,000 of this for the following tasks:

- RMP CEP/Coring Project (2007 labor - \$4,000). The SC approved the analysis of the sediment cores for additional analytes and approved a labor task to synthesize and report this data.
- NWQMC (2007 labor - \$25,000). The RMP has been selected as one of three pilot studies for the NWQMC. A request was made for \$25,000 to assist in the inventorying of Bay area data and to identify key data gaps. Kevin Buchan motioned for approval; Chuck Weir seconded and the SC unanimously approved.
- 2006 Cormorant Egg data (2007 labor - \$10,000). A request was made for \$10,000 to review the results of the 2006 analyses, conduct data validation and to write a report. Kevin Buchan motioned for approval; Adam Oliveri seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- Invasive Oyster research (2007 labor and subcontracts - \$30,000). The SC approved a project investigating the causes and extent of an invasive oyster in the Bay.

In addition, the SC approved the reallocation of 2006 funds associated with cancelled program elements, most notably the episodic toxicity program. A request for \$86,000 for the following tasks was approved by the SC.

- Reanalysis of 2005 bivalve tissue (~\$20,000). This task would use 2005 archive samples to confirm that a new laboratory can achieve better detection limits.
- Dioxin in 2003 and 2006 sportfish (~ \$20,000). There is uncertainty regarding the current concentrations of dioxin in sportfish. This project would analyze 2003 and 2006 sportfish to determine whether dioxin concentrations are still above the screening levels. Kevin Buchan motioned for approval; Tom Mumley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- PS/SS Coring Project (~ \$8,000). The sediment cores will be analyzed for an additional suite of chemicals.
- PS/SS Cormorant egg analyses (~\$38,000). Cormorant eggs will be analyzed for a variety of organic contaminants. Kevin Buchan motioned for approval; Adam Oliveri seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The Steering Committee also approved additional revenue for 2007 from the Copper Development Association, CuDA, (\$32,050) for the analyses of cores for copper. The SC noted that the RMP should seek additional funding if the proposed project is in alignment with the goals of the RMP. It was noted that there have been several RMP projects that have received funding from external groups (e.g., Santa Clara Valley Water District, CEP, etc.). Meg Sedlak commented that if the cores are extracted and analyzed for copper, for a small amount of additional funding, the cores could be analyzed for a whole suite of compounds by ICP-MS. The SC endorsed this idea. Tom Mumley asked whether the cores could be analyzed for selenium. Chuck Weir motioned for approval; Tom Mumley seconded and the motion for acceptance of CuDA funds and additional analyses of cores passed unanimously.

#### **5. Action: Approval of the Redesign of Status and Trends**

Meg Sedlak discussed the TRC-approved summary redesign table (see table below summarizing changes). Kevin Buchan motioned for approval; Chuck Weir seconded. The Steering Committee approved the changes.

#### **6. Action: Request for Contingency Funds**

Andy Cohen presented a proposal to understand the cause of *Crassostrea gigas* (*C. gigas*) in the Bay and to eradicate the invasive oyster. He covered the current knowledge of the invasion by *C. gigas* and the current known distribution of the oysters. One of the possible vectors of the invasion, based on the timing of the invasion and location of beds, is bioaccumulation studies by the RMP, but he noted that several other monitoring programs had also used *C. gigas*.

Adam Olivieri requested that the memorandum be revised to clarify that the RMP is not sponsoring an eradication effort. Tom Mumley commented that understanding the shellfish population was important as this was becoming an emerging indicator in the Bay.

Andy Cohen indicated that casual shellfish surveys had been conducted in the 1970s and 80s but that there is very little recent data.

Kevin Buchan motioned for approval of \$30,000 to conduct research on the invasion of the species into the Bay; Chuck Weir seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**7. Action: Setting Dredgers Fees for 2008**

Sarah Lowe outlined a memorandum describing increases in dredger fees. In 2004, it was agreed that dredger fees would be reviewed every three years and adjustments made to the fee schedule to assure that the dredgers continue to pay their allocation of RMP fees (17.5 percent).

Kevin Buchan noted that of the five major dredgers, three are refineries and they approved of the new fee schedule. Tom Mumley indicated that he approved of the methodology/rationale for the new fees.

The SC indicated that the issue of dredging fees had been brought up numerous times over the last several years and that it was not interested in discussing the exact method for the collection of fees. The committee members reiterated that the dredgers need to pay their share of the program costs (17.5 percent). The method by which they delegate this financial burden was up to the dredgers to decide.

**8. Information: Pulse and Agenda for Annual Meeting**

Meg Sedlak reviewed the Pulse schedule and reminded authors that the articles would be needed soon. Tom Mumley offered to write an article on the evolution of the Basin Plan and water quality in the Bay.

**9. Information: Workgroups and Mercury Meeting**

Meg Sedlak noted that the workgroups would be particularly active in May with all workgroups scheduling meetings to review pilot and special studies and to review current progress on workgroup activities. Meg Sedlak noted that the annual Mercury meeting in February had been particularly well attended with 77 attendees. In general, the survey results were quite positive.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05. Next Steering Committee meeting is set for July 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Table 1**  
**Summary of Recommended Options from the Redesign Meetings**  
**Existing Elements**

Element	Existing Option		Recommended Option		Comments	Rationale
	No. of Sites	Cost/yr	No. of Sites	Cost/yr		
Water Chemistry	31	\$450,000	22 (annual)	\$320,000	Includes savings realized by reducing number of sites as well as conducting PCBs, PAHs, and pesticides biennially. PBDEs and metals will be analyzed annually. <b>Savings: \$130,000</b>	Regulatory shift away from water. Previous number of stations driven by Cu objective which has been revised. Many compounds hydrophobic and legacies of historic practices – little information gained from water column.  Data needed every two years for listings and NPDES permits. May need a winter sampling component for permits.
Sediment Chemistry	47	\$190,000	47 in summer, 14 in winter	\$135,000	Recommended sampling annually but alternating between wet and dry seasons. <b>Savings: \$55,000</b>	No current regulation; however, need for sediment chemistry information across the Bay (random design). Summer sampling focused on status and trends. Winter sampling focused on triad and toxicity. Concern about winter toxicity. Proposed alternating seasons.
Causes of Sediment Toxicity	Variable	\$140,000	Biennial	\$70,000	Recommend biennial frequency. <b>Savings: \$70,000</b>	Need to understand the causes of persistent sediment toxicity in the Bay.
Bivalves	11	\$100,000	11 (biennial)	\$50,000	Recommend conducting biennially. <b>Savings: \$50,000</b>	Best trend indicator for organics, including PAHs. Current data set very powerful for detecting trends.

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	No. of Sites	Cost/yr	No. of Sites	Cost/yr		
Sediment Toxicity	27	\$100,000	14 (annual)	\$85,000	Recommended reducing sites from 27 to 14. <b>Savings: \$15,000</b>	Strong interest in determining causes of toxicity. Toxicity signal is stronger in winter.
Sport fish	5	\$83,000	5 (triennially)	\$85,000	Stay with status quo.	Valuable for assessing impacts on fishing beneficial use, progress in meeting TMDL targets.
USGS Hydrography Studies	36	\$110,000	36 (monthly)	\$110,000	Stay with status quo.	Valuable measure for understanding Bay processes and changes in the food web.
			<b>Total Savings</b>		<b>\$320,000</b>	

**Table 2  
Summary of Added Elements**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Sites</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Cost/yr</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Small Fish	8	Annual	Summer	\$50,000	Start in 2009 after review of four years of pilot data	Provides a means for understand bioavailability of contaminants, especially mercury, and the impacts of management actions (wetland restoration) on biota
Cormorant Eggs	3	Triennial	Spring	\$20,000	Would include Hg, Se, PCBs, legacy pesticides, PBDEs, dioxins, PFOS	Indicator of temporal trends and spatial patterns at the regional scale in deeper water habitat, including emerging contaminants and an archiving strategy
Forster's Tern Eggs	6	Triennial	Spring	\$20,000	Includes Hg, Se, and PBDEs; coordinated with USFWS work	Indicator of effects, temporal trends, and spatial patterns at the local scale in shallow water habitat; link to TMDLs and restoration
Large Tributary Loads	1	Triennial	Winter	\$47,000		Information on loads assists in the development of TMDLs and forecasts and in understanding the efficacy of management practices.

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Guadalupe Loading	1	Triennial	Winter	\$28,000		Information on loads assists in the development of TMDLs and forecasts and in understanding the efficacy of management practices.
Small Tributary Loading	1	Annual	Winter	\$150,000	Rotating through Bay Area watersheds to quantify loads.	Information on loads assists in the development of TMDLs and forecasts and in understanding the efficacy of management practices.
			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$315,000</b>		