

**REGIONAL MONITORING PROGRAM FOR TRACE SUBSTANCES  
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
January 24, 2005**

**Members Present:**

Dave Allan, USSPOSCO Industries  
Kevin Buchan, Western States Petroleum Association  
David Dwinell, US Army Corps of Engineers  
G. Robert Hale, Alameda County Clean Water Program  
Ellen Johnck, Bay Planning Coalition  
Jim McGrath, Port of Oakland  
Adam Olivieri, BASMAA  
Dan Tafolla, Vallejo Sanitation and Flood Control  
Chuck Weir, East Bay Dischargers Authority  
Dyan Whyte, SFB RWQCB

**Others Present:**

Jay Davis, SFEI  
Mike Connor, SFEI  
Sarah Lowe, SFEI  
Meg Sedlak, SFEI

**1. Introductions and Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

After introductions, Kevin Buchan opened the meeting and asked for comments on the October 18, 2004 minutes (Item 1 Attachment 1). Jay Davis stated that all action items had been addressed. No other comments were made and the minutes were approved.

**2. Information: Committee Member Updates**

Jay Davis informed the group about the upcoming RMP San Francisco Wetland Mercury Research Coordination that will be held from 10:00 am to approximately 3:00 pm on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at the San Leandro Marina Inn. Additional information regarding this meeting will be distributed via the forthcoming February San Francisco Bay Mercury News electronic newsletter. Meg Sedlak requested that individuals interested in this meeting or newsletter contact her.

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

Jay Davis summarized the minutes from the most recent TRC meeting on December 21, 2004 (Item 1 Attachment 3) in which the elements of the detailed workplan were discussed and approved. Part of the discussion focused on laboratory performance and receipt of data in a timely manner. A suggestion was made to move the Annual Meeting from the Spring to the Fall to facilitate the reporting of data within a one-year time frame.

The current timing of the meeting results in data being reported 18 months or two years from the time of sample collection. The chair of the TRC, Dave Tucker, concurred that moving the Annual Meeting to facilitate the receipt of data within a one-year time frame would be laudable.

**Action items:**

- **Confirm that the TRC/SC approve moving the Annual Meeting for 2006 from the Spring to the Fall**

**4. Information: Budget Status**

Meg Sedlak presented an updated summary for the RMP Budget (Years 2003 – 2004) (Item 4 Attachment 1). In general, the 2004 budget came in on budget. There was approximately \$32,000 in labor which will be carried over into 2005 to complete unfinished 2004 tasks. The subcontract budget was also on target due to cancellation of contracts (e.g. diving duck samples were compromised as a result of a refrigerator malfunction) and reduction of analytes (e.g., all of the “new analytes” with the exception of PBDEs were dropped). Ms. Sedlak handout a budget status summary sheet.

**5. Action: 2005 Program Plan and Budget for 2005**

Ms. Sedlak presented the 2005 Budget and Program Plan. Meg Sedlak noted that there was a 1.5 percent increase over last year’s budget. Additional revenue streams for 2005 included bad debt from Caltrans (approximately \$60,541) that was written off in December of 2003 and paid in December of 2004. The budget for 2005 was generally balanced with a slight surplus.

Ms. Sedlak described several of the individual program elements including the pilot and special studies that were planned for the year. Ms. Sedlak commented that many of the studies were collaborative efforts with the CEP or jointly-funded by other organizations. Jim McGrath encouraged close collaboration between the RMP and CEP.

Dr. Connor announced that additional funding for the data integration task (i.e., the multi-box model) had been obtained from the CEP. The CEP has allocated approximately \$400,000 for sediment sampling and PCB, mercury and legacy pesticide analyses. Dr. Connor noted that several RMP projects this year are jointly-funded. He commented that the RMP funds are frequently used to leverage additional money from other sources to enhance the scope of work.

The Committee indicated that it would like to see the 2005 budget and the Five-Year Plan annotated with which program elements had received additional funding. Mr. Weir requested that the numbering for the program plan correspond to the 2005 Budget handout.

Chuck Weir and Adam Olivieri made a motion to approve the 2005 Program Plan and the 2005 Budget. These items were approved by the Committee.

**Action item:**

- **Annotate the 2005 Budget and Five-Year Plan with a comment about which projects have received additional funding sources. Revise the program plan to reflect the same numbering scheme as the 2005 Budget handout.**

**6. Discussion: Process for Determining the Budget and Program for 2007 and Beyond**

Dr. Connor briefly summarized a memorandum that he had prepared on the process for approving the annual budget. Dr. Connor stated that the program budget could be divided into four parts: Status & Trends (S&T); USGS studies on sediment dynamics and hydrography and phytoplankton; Special and Pilot Studies; and Program Management. Each part of the program could be evaluated independently with the idea being that not all parts of the program would need to be evaluated annually. Dr. Connor proposed waiting one more year to evaluate S&T as a major redesign occurred in 2002 and insufficient data is present to effectively assess the success of this redesign. Dr. Connor suggested that if the Committee was satisfied with this part of the program that the budget for it should grow at the rate of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Dr. Connor stated that the second program element, the USGS work, is funded by the US Army Corps of Engineers. This funding source has remained stable and fixed for the last several years. No increase was suggested for this work. The third program element, Special and Pilot Studies, is closely tied to issues that directly affect the Committee. For the next several years, a large portion of this budget will be associated with the multi-box model that is jointly-funded by the CEP. Dr. Connor commented on how in general the Pilot and Special Studies are subject to an extensive review process as part of the selection process. Program management, the fourth program element, includes data management, program management, reporting, and information dissemination. Assuming that the Committee is satisfied with this part of the program, Dr. Connor suggested that this program part also increase annually by the CPI.

The Committee discussed briefly the overlap between the CEP and RMP and how to achieve good communication and coordination between the two groups. Dr. Connor noted that both Jay Davis and he attended CEP meetings and that several Committee members serve on both programs (e.g., Dave Tucker serves as chair of the TRC for the RMP and chair of the TC for CEP). A suggestion was made for more formal joint meetings to be made between the CEP and RMP.

A discussion ensued about the South Bay Salt Pond project. Jim McGrath stated that the Salt Pond project presented a good opportunity for the RMP to increase its biological monitoring (e.g., effects of restoration on fauna) and to increase its understanding of sediment dynamics. Dyan Whyte commented that the permit for Salt Pond project had been approved and no regional monitoring had been required. Mr. McGrath pointed out that additional monitoring requirements could be proposed by the Board if it deemed it necessary. Jim McGrath stated that SFEI is well poised to conduct this type of monitoring work.

Chuck Weir stated that he feels the POTWs have a responsibility to see that surface water and sediment quality improve. He indicated that his group is interested in participating in the CEP and RMP to see that the appropriate questions are answered. Adam Olivieri indicated that the BASMAA managers also agree with this philosophy.

Adam Olivieri stated that the SWAMP, CEP and RMP sometimes had disparate goals and suggested that the Board come up with a Bay Area plan for regional monitoring. He also noted that the BASMAA budgets are fixed year to year and that the group is facing increasing financial pressure as individual program elements (e.g., fees) increase without a corresponding increase in revenue.

Jim McGrath commented that the RMP had done a good job of adapting to fiscal constraints and that the Board needed to think about ways to increase the number of participants in the RMP. Adam Olivieri asked whether the Budget Review Memorandum needed to be approved today and Kevin Buchan indicated that it did not. Jay Davis reminded the Committee that due to the budget planning process timeline, the Committee needed to come to some consensus on the budget process soon.

**Action item: Mike Connor will to discuss the budget process at the next SC meeting and to prioritize individual elements for discussion at the next SC meeting.**

#### **7. Action: Responding to Review Panel Recommendations**

Jay Davis distributed four handouts on the Review Panel Recommendations and the actions that the Committees would like to implement. To address the first two items on the handout, it was decided that the RMP staff would write a memorandum describing the RMP planning and decision-making process. The memorandum would include a procedure to resolve conflict when consensus-based decisions cannot be reached. Recommendation number 5, Increase Public Outreach, will be addressed by Chuck Weir who leads the CEP's public outreach. The committee decided that recommendation number 9, include a representative of the environmental community on the Steering Committee, should be addressed by notifying Dan Cloak of Dan Cloak Environmental Consulting and Leo O'Brien of Waterkeepers of the Steering Committee meetings.

**Action item: SFEI to prepare a memorandum address Review Panel Recommendations 1 and 2. Linda Russo to notify Dan Cloak and Leo O'Brien of future Steering Committee meetings.**

#### **8. Discussion: Joint Meeting of the RMP SC and the CEP EMB**

The Program Review Panel and the TRC have recommended that the SC consider a joint meeting with the EMB. A discussion ensued regarding the form of these meetings and who would participate. Dr. Connor offered to hold a meeting with Andy Gunther of the CEP to write a memorandum on how the RMP and CEP work together to address issues

and to discuss the priorities for each program. Ellen Johanck requested that the DMMO be included as well.

**Action item: Dr. Connor and Dr. Gunther to write a memorandum on program elements, collaborative efforts, and priorities for each program. Dr. Connor and Dr. Gunther to include the DMMO in their discussions.**

#### **9. Action: Annual Meeting Agenda**

Dr. Davis presented the agenda for the Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for May 10<sup>th</sup>, and asked for feedback on the proposed topics. Dr. Davis indicated that the theme for this year would be “Answering the Important Questions.” He stated that many of the presentations tied into articles that would appear in this year’s Pulse.

Dyan Whyte suggested that a brief presentation be given at the Annual Meeting regarding the RMP, CEP and the LTMS and how they overlap. Several members recommended removing the copper/nickel talk as it did not seem relevant to current issues in the Bay. Adam Olivieri indicated that he would speak with BASMAA members to see if a presentation could be made on reducing stormwater loads.

**Action item: Adam Olivieri to determine if a presentation can be made on reducing stormwater loads. SFEI, CEP, and LTMS to prepare a brief outline of their respective program elements for the Annual Meeting.**

#### **10. Information: Pulse Update**

Dr. Davis presented the Pulse schedule and indicated that he had contacted all authors and the Pulse appeared to be on schedule. He also stated that Ariel Rubisson-Okamoto had been contacted to prepare a one-page summary of the Pulse and asked whether committee members had other suggestions. Jim McGrath indicated that he thought she did good work and that we should go with her. Jay Davis stated that the Pulse would contain trends data. Adam Olivieri suggested contacting City of Palo Alto as they have conducted some interesting work on trends.

**Action item: Meg Sedlak to contact Ariel Rubison-Okamoto to confirm her availability to write one-page summary. Meg Sedlak to look at City of Palo Alto’s work on trends.**

#### **11. Information: Updating the RMP Objectives and Management Questions**

Jay Davis indicated that Rainer Hoenicke would provide a timeline for comments.

**Action item: Rainer Hoenicke will provide a timeline for comments to Steering Committee members.**

**12. Information: Report on Winter Pilot Study**

Dr. Davis indicated that due to a full agenda only the Winter Pilot Study would be discussed at the meeting. The EEPS program will be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting. Sarah Lowe provided a handout on the Winter Pilot Study and briefly summarized this work. Ms. Lowe indicated that 2001 was the last time samples were collected in the winter season. The wet weather sampling is important for determining 303 (d) listings and preparing NPDES permits.

Ms. Lowe reminded the Committee that several issues with regard to sampling need to be addressed: seasonality of the data (e.g., impacts of wet weather on the data), aquatic toxicity (e.g., determination of sediment toxicity), and redesign of the sampling plan (i.e., the current plan is based on copper which is no longer an issue). It is anticipated that these issues will be addressed through work groups in 2005.

**Action item: Jay Davis to provide a summary of EEPS work at next Steering Committee meeting.**

**13. Information: Program Update**

Meg Sedlak provided copies of the Scorecard to members. Adam Olivieri asked that the handouts be sent to him electronically.

**Action item: Meg Sedlak to send Adam Olivieri a copy of all handouts electronically and to post handouts, agendas, and meeting schedules on SFEI web site.**

**14. Schedule for Next Meeting and Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for April 18th at 12:30 pm.