

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA WETLANDS RESTORATION PROGRAM  
COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**MEETING SUMMARY  
APRIL 8, 2004**

**Attendees:**

Marcia Brockbank (San Francisco Estuary Project)  
John Brosnan (Wetlands Restoration Program)  
Shin-Roei Lee (San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board)  
Molly Martindale (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)  
Steve McAdam (San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission)  
Mike Monroe (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)  
Brian Mulvey (NOAA Fisheries)  
Chris Potter (California Resources Agency)  
Carl Wilcox (California Department of Fish and Game)

**1. Introductions**

Mike Monroe and Chris Potter co-chaired the meeting and opened with a roundtable of introductions. Mike asked for any announcements. Steve McAdam said there is a public hearing before the BCDC Commissioners on the Interim Stewardship Plan (ISP) of the South Bay Salt Ponds project, next week. Steve noted the Regional Board recently approved the waste discharge requirement permit for the ISP on March 17 (the 401 certification is still to come). Brian Mulvey mentioned \$75,000 has been designated for monitoring and baseline research for fish in the South Bay Salt Ponds project. The funding will come from the NOAA Restoration Center. Mike noted there is a methylated mercury (MeHg) workshop at the Regional Board office on April 14.

**2. March 11 Coordinating Committee Meeting Summary**

John stated the Coordinating Committee's January project tracking-related letter to the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture and the San Francisco Estuary Institute has not yet received a formal response from the Joint Venture (Mike May responded on behalf of SFEI in February). Marcia noted the Joint Venture is continuing to seek partner input on the content of their tracking system; she noted Estuary Project staff has suggested including a project's latitude and longitude and linear feet measurements, as well as urged greater collaboration with SFEI's system. On a related topic, Molly Martindale noted she, Andree Breaux and Mike May are close to completion of a standard project information request form. This form will seek a wide variety of information on all projects - restoration or mitigation in nature - and that information can be used to populate the Corps' and SFEI's project tracking systems. John had compiled the discussions on the proposed WRP permitting workshop and distributed that summary to the Committee. The Executive Council meeting planning will be covered in agenda item 4. Finally, John stated he's been in contact with staff at the John Muir Heritage Land Trust about potential DRG review of the Pacheco Marsh restoration.

**3. WRP Group Reports**

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**Wetlands Monitoring Group.** John stated the WRP Monitoring Group received five qualified applicants in response to its Request for Qualifications for paid members of the monitoring plan review teams. Four of those applications were received prior to the RFQ's thirty-day deadline. John and Andree Breaux reviewed the applications on March 29. John noted the review of the Sonoma Baylands monitoring plan will commence with the release of the final report, which is expected in April. The next Monitoring Group meeting is set for Tuesday, May 11.

**Overall WRP Funding.** John noted he has spent a good deal of time researching potential funding sources for the WRP and informed the Committee that there remains enough funds to allow him to work 100% time through September 2004. John researched funding opportunities with foundations, private and nonprofit organizations and government agencies (primarily EPA and NOAA). His investigation turned up no potential funding leads that are viable in the coming six months; he noted that the preponderance of available funding opportunities are reserved for acquisition and on-the-ground restoration, opposed to operational funds for government agency programs. Chris Potter noted the Resources Agency might be able to allocate some of its NOAA funding, yet that could not take place until at least June 2005. Mike mentioned the prospect of using Regional Board Administrative Civil Liabilities (ACL) funds to fund the WRP. Molly noted the Corps was unlikely to be able to assist, financially, since all of their collected fees are sent to the U.S. Treasury. Steve asked about U.S. FWS funds (contact, Rick Morat) and California Bay-Delta Authority funds. Mike suggested, alternatively, that in order to retain John's position that the WRP allow the position to respond to and be determined by which agency is able to pay for his time; this could cut John's time down from 100% on the WRP, but could allow it to continue to operate. Brian suggested exploring national Estuary Restoration Act funds available to watershed coordinators. Mike stated he and John will attend the LTMS Management Committee meeting on April 23 and they will apprise the group of the WRP funding situation and its proposed solutions.

#### **4. Planning for the next Executive Council meeting**

John noted he had contacted Executive Council members, as directed, and June 9 emerged as the ideal meeting date; the meeting will be held in at the Resources Agency offices in Sacramento. Chris said Executive Council co-chair and Resources Agency Secretary Chrisman is holding this date and time. Chris also noted he's scheduling a briefing with Chrisman on the WRP, to be held later this month. John proposed to walk through the list of potential agenda items and obtain the Committee members' feedback. He noted the agenda would be led by group announcements and a presentation of the WRP's first Annual Report; the Annual Report would contain a summary of WRP accomplishments over the past year and lay out possible objectives over the next year to come. John would present the Annual Report in hard copy and in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. A substantial discussion on long-term funding for the WRP will be included in the agenda, as well.

Relative to the concept of featuring presentations of the Bay Area's existing and developing project-tracking systems, Steve McAdam felt this use of the Council's time might not be most beneficial. Molly felt the group should be made aware of means to assess wetland acreage gains and losses. Mike suggested allowing for such presentations, but asking Executive Directors from the organizations to give the presentations; the presentations should be relatively brief and

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non-technical. Carl Wilcox felt the Committee should choose general policy issues for presentation and the messages have to be well honed down; Carl stated the issues presented should be broadly applicable to the South Bay Salt Ponds and wetlands restoration in general. Carl felt SFEI's Wetland Tracker should be presented, since it tracks all projects - mitigation and restoration - and it could demonstrate whether projects are living up to their monitoring requirements. Carl also suggested highlighting how the WRP includes standing science panels and involves science in wetlands projects vis a vis the DRG and the Monitoring Group.

Steve saw the goal of the 2004 Executive Council meeting as selling the merits of the WRP. As such, Steve suggested the group undertake a mock strategic planning session. Molly stressed the need to show the Executive Council that only one person essentially manages the WRP. Mike proposed highlighting the purpose under which the group was established, the accomplishments of the last year and the proposed objectives of the coming year. Marcia felt the Council should revisit its year-old policy of barring DRG review of some mitigation projects. Molly agreed, stating the WRP is primarily a tool for the agencies; for this reason, she felt the Council might want to reconsider its mitigation project policy. Carl suggested highlighting that the agencies do not have the technical expertise to review all of the nuances that the DRG can and that DRG review has nothing to do with whether a permit is approved or not. Mike felt the meeting could include a discussion about the group's membership. Marcia suggested presenting the membership issue by noting consistent participation from particular agencies.

**Steve saw the agenda surely including a presentation of the Annual Report, an overview of the past year's accomplishments, the coming year's proposed and potential accomplishments, and highlighting the concept of an annual meeting and review of membership.** Chris felt the WRP should illustrate its review updates given to the LTMS Management Committee. Carl suggested the Committee explore the WRP heading up coordination for the CALFED San Pablo Bay Implementation Plan. Steve and Mike both felt the WRP presentation should highlight the large projects coming on line in the near future and talk about the WRP will assist in those projects. Steve felt that while some projects are large in physical size, several projects could have potentially contentious policy issues [and proactively addressing these issues was part of the impetus for creating the WRP]. Several committee members felt John should give all of the WRP presentations, in order to demonstrate that he is behind the WRP's actions. Shin-Roei noted the base closures coming online and the potential for the WRP to become involved in restoration at those sites, including Hamilton, Hunter's Point, Moffett Field, Mare Island and Alameda NAS.

Carl suggested mentioning that the WRP Executive Council is named in the South Bay Salt Ponds management structure. The Committee felt non-WRP presentations should be limited to West Nile Virus and invasive species control efforts. The group suggested John work closely with Karl Malamud-Roam on any WNV issues. Steve felt this would demonstrate how effective a forum the WRP is for investigating broad wetlands-related problems. Brian Mulvey asked if the Committee could propose an action at the Executive Council meeting and the Committee felt there might not be an action at this meeting. Carl felt the Executive Council might have to engage in the Invasive Spartina Project at some point, as CDFG has no funding to do Spartina control. He felt the Council could identify funding recommendations for the organization and its control efforts, as well as identify potential roadblocks that either do or will need interagency

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coordination. Carl suggested John coordinate with Peggy Olofson and ask her how she felt these issues would be addressed in the future.

Marcia suggested isolating one primary "heads up" item and presenting it separately; Molly proposed this be the WNV presentation. **The Committee felt the Invasive Spartina Project should be less detailed and presented as a short update, while the WNV item could be a full presentation. Carl said he would follow up with Ronda Reed at CALFED regarding the San Pablo Bay Implementation Plan.** Marcia reminded the Committee that the Regional Board initially funded the San Pablo Bay Implementation Plan. **John will compile a draft Executive Council meeting agenda based on these comments and distribute it for review within 2 weeks.**

**5. Wrap-up/Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting date was set for Tuesday, May 4, to be held in Oakland from 1-3 PM. The meeting was adjourned the meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- **John will compile a draft Executive Council meeting agenda based on these comments and distribute it for review within 2 weeks.**
- **John will begin work on the draft WRP Annual Report in mid-April and distribute the first draft to the Committee in early May.**