

**San Francisco Bay Area
Wetlands Restoration Program**

**Design Review Group
Draft Meeting Notes
August 30, 2002**

Attendees:

John Brosnan (Wetlands Restoration Program)
Josh Collins (San Francisco Estuary Institute)
Steve Granholm (LSA Associates)
Leslie Lacko (San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission)
Karl Malamud-Roam (Contra Costa Mosquito Vector Control District)
Molly Martindale (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)
Mike Monroe (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)
Michelle Orr (Philip Williams Associates)
Carl Wilcox (California Department of Fish and Game)

1. Introductions and Agenda Review/Announcements

Mike Monroe (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) chaired the meeting and opened with a brief round of introductions.

Karl Malamud-Roam (Contra Costa Mosquito Vector Control District) announced that there would be a meeting of the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Technical Committee at 10 A.M. on Thursday, September 5th, at the Coastal Conservancy office in Oakland.

2. July 19, 2002 Meeting Summary

Mike provided a very brief summary of the last DRG meeting. No meeting notes were on hand from that meeting.

3. WRP Group Reports

Mike apprised the group on the recent actions of the Executive Council and the Management Group. Items mentioned included: the fact that the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture would be a viable resource for potential Executive Council field trips; the exclusion of coastal habitats from the Wetlands Restoration Program's geographic boundaries; and, the yet-to-be-determined inclusion of subtidal habitats in the Wetlands Restoration Program's geographic boundaries.

Mike mentioned the status of group's public involvement effort. Mike said that the website – to come within the next month – and the Executive Council field trip are on the horizon as the next public involvement items. John Brosnan (Wetlands Restoration Program) updated the group on the Executive Council feedback forms that he'd put together. John also shared with the group that the Restoration Program's handout/brochure would be forthcoming in the next month. Mike stated that the brochure would be a great resource for the group.

Josh Collins shared that the Monitoring Group's next meeting would take place on September 10th, where the group was going to be discussing the merging of that group with the Design Review Group into what would be known as a Science Support Group.

Josh Collins (San Francisco Estuary Institute) informed the group that the EMAP Intensification Project was beginning this Labor Day weekend. The project is a health assessment of the Bay taken in random locations. The goal of the exercise is to assess the effectiveness of random sampling methods. Josh also shared that the Section 104 Project was also beginning, which will test more detailed protocols testing. Josh added that the next Section 104 grant proposal was going to EPA next month.

Josh continued with an update on Paul Jones' (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) development of the yearlong Certified Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM) schedule. The CRAM checklist should be available for use in the next 6-9 months and the system should be entirely up and running by next year.

Josh added that the CALFED Science Program and the CALFED Wetlands Monitoring Pilot are being conducted through San Francisco State University and have yet to receive formal funding.

Molly Martindale (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) said that the CRAM checklist was a good indicator of "how we are doing." Josh added that the scores achieved on the checklist are defensible, repeatable scores but added that our use of the checklist will not be for making regulatory determinations.

Karl shared that Contra Costa County had used the CRAM system to rate habitat's ecological value and habitat's restoration potential.

Molly expressed the opinion that in the future, the group should spend less time on group catch-up reports at the opening of the Design Review Group meetings. The group seemed to concur.

4. Review of Design Review Group Documents

Mike stated that the Group should start thinking about projects to review and establish methodology for that project review. The standing body on the group needs to be formalized as well.

The group began reviewing the RFQ. Karl raised the issue of a state bid threshold and informed the group that if the RFQ was advertising at a pay rate beyond a certain state threshold, then at least three qualified applicants must then be interviewed. **ACTION ITEM:** John to ask Marcia Brockbank about the state bid threshold.

Steve Granholm (LSA Associates) suggested giving people budgets and suggested that an RFQ is the best way for us to go about finding new group members, as it allows the group to retain the choice.

Molly suggested that what was missing from the RFQ is the breakdown of the types of projects people will be involved in. She suggested adding to the RFQ a request for the types of projects that people would be most interested in working on. This would allow for a better pairing of applicants and their interests and strong points.

Karl stated that Section VIII of the RFQ needed to have an explicit statement of needs required in the Statement of Work. Steve suggested deleting # 2 and to take # 1 and give us two pages. Molly suggested combining 3 and 4.

Karl suggested that the description of pay in the RFQ should include a flat rate up to a ceiling. In addition, up front, we need to state that we are a subset of the Bay-Delta and to let people know that we are not dealing with Delta projects. We need to include local watersheds. In Section 7, we should consider including a checklist that includes people's professions and any relevant certifications.

The group then suggested that we include Monitoring in the RFQ in preparation for the potential merging of the two groups. Everyone agreed that the language could be made more vague so as to solicit Statements of Qualifications for both Design Review group members and Monitoring group members. Karl suggested using the language of "as a service to the Wetlands Restoration Program" instead of only towards the Design Review group. Mike summarized the changes – make the RFQ more general and send it out.

Karl wanted to know how the group would select from the Prequalified List. John shared the procedure that he and Marcia Brockbank had discussed. The procedure will adhere to usual ABAG guidelines. Criteria will be used to rank the candidates and will be developed before the receipt of individual Statements of Qualifications. If there are too many people who make the prequalified list, then interviews may be held.

Molly suggested that if anyone present at the meeting hopes to be paid for their services, than they must prepare a Statements of Qualifications and submit. Karl wondered about deciding who gets on the core group and who gets to be paid. Molly suggested that all those currently present at the meeting should be core group members.

Karl stated that the core group should make the decisions on which projects to review and who sits on which review teams as well. Mike suggested that it could be appropriate to have paid members work with the core team, as well. Molly suggested separate meetings for selecting projects.

In terms of the Announcement Letter, Molly suggested deleting the first and third paragraphs and then deleting the fourth bullet. Steve suggested emphasizing some of the "early phase" language – i.e., how the Design Review group will aid projects in their earliest forms. Carl Wilcox (California Department of Fish and Game) suggested emphasizing the peer review component of the group. Karl suggested adding language that fosters bringing in projects for the greater good of the estuary. He also stated the different cover letters may be necessary depending on who we are writing to. Steve suggested including bullets informing the project proponents of items that we can and cannot help them with. The group concurred that this was a good idea. **ACTION**

ITEM: Include these new items in the announcement letter and Molly to provide a sentence in place of the letter's fourth, deleted bullet.

Karl wanted to make sure that there were no promises implied in the announcement letter. Molly concurred and stated that the letter should emphasize non-official, non-regulatory, and non-agency involvement insofar as the Design Review group.

The Group suggested that someone from the Regional Water Board be on the Design Review group.

In terms of the acceptance letter, the group generally agreed with the text provided. Molly provided line item edits to John. Josh suggested the attached project summary sheet should include an anticipated timeline and project constraints, if it does not already. **ACTION ITEM:** John to type up the Project Summary form and email it out to the group.

In terms of the decline letter, Michelle Orr (Philip Williams Associates) wanted to know if we could include any information when we can't review their project, such as other options that we could inform them of. We can include that we recommend that the project proponent talk with their local Mosquito Abatement Districts and local Flood Control Districts.

In terms of the Letter of Review, Molly provided line item edits to John. **ACTION ITEM:** Leslie Lacko (San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission) to provide any standard disclaimer language to John.

In terms of the Conflict of Interest statement, **ACTION ITEM:** Leslie Lacko to provide any standard conflict of interest language to John.

5. Preconstruction Design Assessment

Due to time constraints, this discussion topic was postponed.

6. Combining the Design Review Group and the Monitoring Group

Due to time constraints, this discussion topic was postponed.

7. Wrap-Up/Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items

Mike stated that before the meeting was adjourned that the group needed to identify projects for next time. The following projects were selected for those reasons listed:

- Bruener – Just south of Point Pinole. This project has many habitats and includes a mitigation bank. The project is ready for technical review. Contact: Jeff Olberding
- A-4 – South Bay. This project is just beginning its planning and they are ready to talk about design concepts.
- Coyote Hills – South Bay, west of Fremont. 600 acres. They have a conceptual plan and the Flood Control District and the East Bay Regional Parks District would like to

present the project. The groundwater is coming back in the vicinity of this project, so they have many questions about appropriate habitat types.

Karl then gave an update on the preparations for West Nile virus in California. West Nile should be present in Southern California by June of next year and in Northern California by August, or the following year. This could lead to increasing social sentiment against wetlands restoration as well as increased policing power of the local Vector Control Districts. Although tidal marshes do not present viable mosquito breeding grounds, duck ponds and agricultural fields could present potential hazards.

Mike asked the group if meeting after the next Monitoring group meeting was acceptable. The group agreed and decided to meet from 1:30 to 4:30 on September 10th, at the Regional Board Office.

The meeting was adjourned.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Revise Design Review Group documents based upon changes detailed herein.
- John to ask Marcia Brockbank about the state bid threshold.
- Molly to provide a sentence in place of the announcement letter's fourth, deleted bullet.
- Leslie Lacko to provide any disclaimer and standard conflict of interest language to John.
- John to type up and email the Project Summary sheet to all DRG members.