

Summary of **Wetland Monitoring Group (WMG) Meeting** of the San Francisco Bay Wetland Restoration Project. The meeting was held on Tuesday, May 8, 2007 from 1:30 - 4 p.m., Room 15, Second Floor, 1515 Clay Street, Oakland, CA. 94612.

Attendees: Marcia Brockbank (SFEP); Andree Breaux & Naomi Feger (Water Board), Art Feinstein (Joint Venture); Jessica Hamburger & Jennifer Feinberg (BCDC); Phil Lebednik (LFR); Maxene Spellman & Betsy Wilson, Coastal Conservancy; Luisa Valiela (EPA). The following notes were written by A. Breaux, and nothing stated herein represents the policy of the San Francisco Bay Water Board.

I. Budget Review (Brockbank): \$3,000 has been reserved from the 2006 budget for the BCDC Wind Wave Energy Symposium (described below). The budget for 2007 is \$8,000, of that \$2,700 has been reserved for the Monitoring Team Review of Bair Island. The remaining \$5,300 can be spent on a combination of the following:

A. \$2,000 -- \$3,000 for San Francisco Estuary Institute's (SFEI) website maintenance for the Wetland Monitoring Team (WMG) and the Monitoring Review Team (MRT) (this was discussed with SFEI after the meeting.) This is associated with SFEI's Wetland Regional Monitoring Program, which contains the Wetland Tracker currently used by the San Francisco Bay Water Board to track wetland projects. It also relates to the California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM). SFEI estimates \$2,000 -3,000 to maintain the WMG & MRT website. Since the funding for the State Water Board's Prop 50 grant has been approved, the website maintenance fee for the WMG website may be less.

B. The MRT could review one of the following projects: Yosemite Slough in San Francisco; Cullinan Ranch (draft EIR is expected shortly); Hamilton (breach not expected until 2014; a monitoring plan was due last year (?)); this project may organize its own monitoring review team); Kaiser Brothers (west of Skagg's Island; a potential mitigation bank in the early permitting stages; Eden Landing (part is already breached); Petaluma Marsh (already breached).

C. The MRT (predominantly scientists) could meet in conjunction with the WMG members and others with experience in program evaluation and agency procedures, to advise on the implementation of the Wetland Regional Monitoring Program. Many of the components of a Wetland RMP are already in place to standardize monitoring elements and requirements for mitigation and restoration projects, and to establish a landscape scale ambient monitoring program that could take some of the burden off individual projects for monitoring methyl-mercury, accretion, or birds. Permanent funding needs to be established. (SFEI will continue these under its 2-year Prop 50 grant (for description see below under "III. Updates"). The Joint Venture is interested in monitoring its own projects so it could work with the agencies to assure consistent monitoring methods. (SFEI could attend this MRT meeting, but should not participate due to a potential conflict of interest.)

Andree Breaux recommends #C above in addition to what SFEI will need to maintain the WMG & MRT website. Please let her know if you have any ideas or comments on the best way to spend the remaining funds for 2007 before June 15, 2007.

II. Monitoring Review Team (MRT) Review of Bair Island on 2/28/07 and General Procedures for future MRT meetings (Breaux). The Bair Island project was presented by Clyde Morris to the MRT on 2/28/07. Permits will be obtained in 2007 or 2008 for the 1,400 acre restoration site, part of which will be filled with dredged or upland sediment. MRT recommendations for the project discussed at the 2/28 meeting can be found at www.wrmp.org/review.html. The website also contains the following: a list of procedures for future MRT meetings; the 2 documents reviewed by the MRT (Monitoring Plan for Bair Island [2004] and the USFWS Biological Opinion [2006]); and supplemental comments provided by one of the MRT members. Comments or questions on any of these should be sent to ABreaux@waterboards.ca.gov.

III. Updates:

- CCMP Revisions & State of the Estuary Conference (Brockbank): The Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (1993) is 15 years old, and therefore being updated. 60 new actions will be added to the existing 145. These will be presented at the State of the Estuary Conference along with the successes, challenges, and vision for the Estuary at the Scottish Rite Center in Oakland on October 16, 17, 18. Student posters are encouraged. Information on the conference is available at <http://sfep.abag.ca.gov/soe>.
- SFEI Prop 50 grant for Regional Wetland Monitoring in the San Francisco Bay (SFB); Wetland RMP (Collins or Breaux). SFEI will begin implementing this proposal to expand the Wetland Tracker; increase wetland & riparian assessments with CRAM; write new monitoring proposals & update old ones; work with EPA's Wetland Demonstration Project Steering Committee and with the SFB WMG (this group).
- Wetland Tracker (Breaux). Mike May gave a presentation to the SFB Water Board on use of the Wetland Tracker and he is working with the State Board to assure that it will be compatible with CIQWS when that database is finalized by the State Water Board. The SFB Water Board will assess the quality of the data submitted into the Wetland Tracker this summer.
- IRWM & Prop 50 grant for Suisun (Siegel was not able to attend).
- BCDC's Wind Wave Energy (WWE) Symposium (Hamburger) (see attachment): Jessica Hamburger is the new program analyst at BCDC who will be organizing the symposium which is expected to be held this fall. It will consist of invited speakers and an open discussion of the pros and cons of structures designed to attenuate wind-wave energy in restored tidal wetlands. If you have questions, contact Jessica at jessicah@bcdca.gov. Marcia suggested that effective biotechnical wave and erosion control measures that could be discussed at the Symposium can be found in the *Demonstration Project: Protection and*

*Enhancement of Delta In-Channel Islands, Project Summary (June 20006)
prepared by the Delta In-Channel Work Group (www.delta.ca.gov).*

- Salt Pond Restoration:
Napa Salt Plant – A Tentative Order is on the Water Board’s website for this project which is expected to go before the Water Board at the July 11, 2007 meeting (see http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/tentative_order.htm. Comments are due June 11, 2007 to be considered before the July 11th meeting.)
South Bay Salt Ponds – Deadline for comments on the Draft EIR/S was May 3, 2007. A Record of Decision and Permitting are expected in the fall. For information see www.southbayrestoration.org.
- Other Conferences: Society of Wetland Scientists Meeting, June10-15, 2007 in Sacramento (www.sws.org)
- Subtidal Goals Project: The Habitat Characterization Report has been completed and will be released in June 2007; the Working Groups continue to meet; the Steering Committee meets June 5, 2007; the final report will be released in 2008.
- Other: Maxene stated that the endangered California Clapper Rails are reproducing at several sites with invasive cordgrass including Cogswell Marsh (it is not known if there are successful at Colma Creek).

IV. Action Items:

1. Naomi will discuss coordinating with the SFB Joint Venture at the next Surface Water Integration Group meeting in June at the Water Board.

2. Andree will:

(a) discuss with SFEI staff:

(i) the estimated cost of website maintenance for 2007; and

(ii) the potential to have an MRT-WMG meeting to evaluate implementing the Wetland RMP by continued use of the Wetland Tracker, CRAM, and the establishment a funding mechanism to cover the cost of monitoring both ambient and individual wetland projects in the SFB Region;

(b) remind MRT reviewers to send invoices for Bair Island review.

Next Wetland Monitoring Group meeting is Tuesday, Dec 4, 2007, 1:30-4 at the Water Board Office in Oakland.

Please send any comments on these meeting notes to abreaux@waterboards.ca.gov.