



## Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program

Steering Committee Meeting Notes  
March 30, 2023, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### Meeting Attachments:

- [12/13/22 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
- [TAC's Jamboard about Monitoring Plan](#)
- [Cleaned up ideas from Jamboard](#)
- [WRMP Spring 2023 Newsletter](#)

### Meeting Slides:

[https://bayareametro.sharepoint.com/:p/s/wrmp/Eekj8EeVl1dHhT\\_7bGEBsR0BGucIUZ40kv3JEMkLI3LhAg?e=Y0zeOb](https://bayareametro.sharepoint.com/:p/s/wrmp/Eekj8EeVl1dHhT_7bGEBsR0BGucIUZ40kv3JEMkLI3LhAg?e=Y0zeOb)

**Steering Committee Members and Alternates:** Sandra Scoggin (Chair, SFBJV), Erika Castillo (Vice Chair; Alameda County Mosquito Abatement), Christina Toms (Water Board; WRMP TAC Chair), Brenda Goeden (BCDC), Brian Meux (NMFS), Dave Halsing (SBSRP), Erin Chappell (CDFW), Jessie Olson (Save the Bay), Laurel Larsen (DSC), Luisa Valiela (US EPA), Matt Graul (EBRPD), Mike Chotkowski (USGS), Natalie Reeder (EBRPD), Steve Detwiler (USFWS), Stacy Sherman (CDFW)

**WRMP Staff:** Sasha Harris-Lovett, Alex Thomsen, Taylor Pantiga (SFEP); Donna Ball, Caitlin Crain, Cristina Grosso (SFEI)

### Other Attendees:

Dylan Chapple (DSC; WRMP TAC member), John Bourgeois (Valley Water; WRMP TAC member)

### Decision Items

- Meeting minutes for the 12/13/22 Steering Committee meeting-approved

### Announcements:

- CA Natural Resources Agency looking for feedback on draft implementation of senate bill SB 27- California Carbon Sequestration and Climate Resiliency Project Registry  
<https://resources.ca.gov/-/media/CNRA-Website/Files/Initiatives/Expanding-Nature-Based-Solutions/SB27ConceptDiscussionDraft32723.pdf>

### WRMP Project Updates

- Admin workgroup meeting-Reached out to DWR about having seat on SC
  - Will vote if DWR is interested in joining

- Trying to differentiate role between SC and TAC
  - TAC-technical advice, SC-decision making
- Geospatial Data Catalog launched (<https://data.wrmp.org/>)
- Monitoring Site Network memo approved
  - Sasha taking lead to notify landowners
  - Let Sasha know if you have someone in your agency who she should contact
- Coordination between SC and TAC
  - Encourage SC members to attend TAC meetings when there are specific topics you want to weigh in on, coordinate w/ your agency's TAC representative
  - Comment from chat: It would be helpful if you want us to do that to get agendas etc., for the TAC so we're aware of the meeting topics, but honestly it's a capacity issue to be able to attend both
- Welcome new CA Sea Grant State Fellow, Taylor Pantiga
- Communications team: spring newsletter online-[Newsletter](#)
- Drafting WRMP communication plan- will have opportunities to provide feedback

### **Baylands Change Basemap Update**

- Geospatial workgroup + mapping team updated classifications and developing image glossary
- Developing decision tree + classification tree and testing eCognition (automatic software for mapping), testing automated mapping at 4 locations, will use to further refine classification key
- Over the next few months, the group will develop a draft basemap and seek feedback
- Final basemap in Nov 2023; will be available in geospatial database and integrate into CARI and EcoAtlas

Luisa Valiela: Cristina, would you mind sending me separately the slides on this that you just shared? want to share internally at EPA as well-- may even ask you to do a mini presentation to our SF Bay Team?

Brenda Goeden would also like a copy of slides.

### **Workgroup Updates**

Workgroups are aiming to finish SOPs by the end of year, more quickly if possible

#### *Vegetation workgroup*

- SOP addresses vegetation related management questions at 2 scales (site specific and remote, landscape level)
  - Developing best ways to calibrate and validate remote sensing
  - Slowing down to clarify monitoring questions to ensure product address the questions we want answered
  - Will link methods for monitoring into hydrogeomorphic variables as site specific scale

#### *Fish and fish habitat workgroup*

- Taking SOP to TAC for approval in April
  - Developed inventory of fish monitoring in estuary and best practices for fish sampling

Steve Detwiler would like to have office representation on workgroup-would like to stay in loop

#### *Hydrogeomorphic workgroup*

- Launched in March, gathering experts in region
  - Taking different approach, taking existing SOPs and put into WRMP framework

Brenda Goeden would like to be added to hydrogeomorphic list

Discussion:

- Write up communication piece about the collaborative process for the Fish and Fish Habitat SOP, shareable format like newsletter

### **Monitoring Plan – next step for implementing the WRMP**

- Developing plan for which level 1, 2, and 3 indicators should be monitored
- Based on previously approved science priorities
- Contract requirements
  - Limited money to implement new data collection
  - Required to crosswalk indicators btw WRMP and SFBRA
- Working to define monitoring plan (bridge btw existing data and products) and desired information products (where we want to go)
  - Need to notify landowners and see interest in site being in monitoring network
- Have a basic outline of the monitoring plan. It will be fleshed out next week
- Jamboard in January - asked TAC a few key questions
  - Very targeted to address monitoring plan deliverable
  - What can be done in near term, utilizes existing data
- Next steps
  - Discuss outline at next TAC meeting (10 pg. outline)
    - Revise
  - Acquire key existing/legacy datasets
  - Hold meetings with TAC members and WGs to ensure understanding of limitations
  - Write plan-solid draft by end of summer, go through SC and TAC approval process by end of year
  - Can share matrices if folks would like to see them
- Matrix shows how many different questions/data products can come out of different analyses

Discussion:

- Brenda Goeden would like to see matrices/outline for own understanding before providing feedback on the monitoring plan, orientation to bigger document
- SC members always welcome to join TAC meetings
- SC please coordinate with your TAC members with thoughts on deliverables
- Won't be proposing monitoring everything in the 1<sup>st</sup> year

### **People & Wetlands possible management questions**

- WG objectives: develop indicators, metrics, and monitoring standards that includes human connections to wetlands
- Today sharing a possible update to management questions, at the June meeting sharing a proposal
- Working under Guiding Question 5

- Working to develop indicators relating to human interactions with wetlands is relevant to funders
- Workgroup internal priorities: promote equity, promote community pride and stewardship of wetlands, center perspectives of marginalized communities and Tribes, improve public health
- Possible new/revised Management Questions
  - 2 new questions-doesn't include direct mention of indicators, but will be developed at next workgroup meeting
  - SOTER can be an avenue to more broadly share WRMP indicators related to this workgroup
  - Revising Management Question 5B
    - Adds inclusion of public access/restoration
- Next steps
  - Looking for SC feedback on the possible questions
  - Microsoft office form QR code or [https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oMSEsBm7QkG3A4LqZaXusqXd\\_oNG4awxBhzRIgo8jZ6xUNEhYVE8wVVZFT1FWT0sxVzVWTFpON0dZOC4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oMSEsBm7QkG3A4LqZaXusqXd_oNG4awxBhzRIgo8jZ6xUNEhYVE8wVVZFT1FWT0sxVzVWTFpON0dZOC4u)
    - Submit form by April 14th
  - Optional special meeting Thurs. April 13th 10-11 am
  - Can do form and/or meeting
  - Take feedback and discuss with workgroup to bring proposed questions to SC at next meeting for a consensus vote

Discussion:

- From chat regarding question 1: The question is very broad. I would encourage the working group to consider how that management question could be translated into discrete monitoring questions that can be integrated into the science framework.
- Regarding question 2: Should "relationship" be plural in that question? Those pieces all interact with each other, right?
- Regarding question 2: I love the 'have we realized the expected benefits?' question with respect to the social part of the wetlands restoration equation. That question seems to rarely get asked (or at least, clearly asked) and it's important.
- New staff just joined BCDC, were they able to be involved?
  - Very engaged, glad they were able to join, have someone else from BCDC giving input as well

**Priorities for a 5-10 year workplan**

- Charter mentions creating long-term plan for WRMP (5-10 year plan)
- How important is it for WRMP to collect data from "shock" events?
  - Split between somewhat, very, and essential
- If special studies are important-what special studies should WRMP prioritize in 1<sup>st</sup> 10 years?
  - Somewhat important most popular

Discussion:

- How WRMP can collect data from "shock" events
  - SFEI-waited 11 years for rain, and were ready to go when it happened
    - But have their own scientists ready to go

- Having something ready to go with SFEI team or have standing contract
- Setting up coordination in advance with structure is the way to go, resources are out there but the coordination is key
  - Less complicated than contracting but requires more communication
- If have other thoughts, get in contact w/ team afterwards

Comment from chat: I would have liked the poll to have had another answer option which would have asked if supportive beyond the 1-5 years I am assuming we are scoping in

Another member agrees

Comment from chat: Urge steering committee members-think about contract mechanisms, how budgets are reserved for event-based monitoring, how it is contracted out, who it is contracted to (gov, non-gov, etc.)

Comment from chat: "Somewhat important" is not that strong a level of support. More in the breakout, I guess, but I certainly meant "somewhat" in the sense of "only if and after other, more basic types of monitoring are up and running well". They are much lower priorities than getting the fundamentals right.

Another member voted with the same meaning

Comment from chat: One more thought on the questions: The role of monitoring is to track change over time. Developing relationships between drivers and outcomes is better addressed in special studies and is a critical role as well. I think reserving funding and including a process for prioritizing special studies will be an important part of the WRMP.

Comment from chat: (Agrees with above comment). Special studies are much more important than the 'shock' monitoring. But neither are as vital as making sure the core monitoring functions are getting done. Another member likes the message.

Comment from chat: I voted "very important" on the special studies, as I think it is a real challenge for the core program to be 'all things to all people'. We all know there are specific sub-regional issues, so I think these special studies will be needed to fill some gaps.

Comment from chat: It seems to me that event-based monitoring is really a subset of special studies. Special studies are special because they address either a really specific question that doesn't fall neatly into the "ambient" or "project-based" baskets, or they address a very specific time scale, or a very specific spatial scale... maybe we don't have to separate the two? I don't think we did in the Program Plan.

Another member likes this message.

Comment from chat: It's a good point. But I'd then only slightly reword my argument and say that "event-based monitoring" is on the lower-priority end of the special-study spectrum.

Questions from chat:

- Mike Chotkowski: is there a place to provide more detailed feedback on those questions?
- Brenda Goeden: will WRMP be collector of data?

### **Monitoring in the upper SF Estuary**

- Interagency Ecological Program (IEP)
  - Around since 1970, currently includes 9 agencies and the stewardship council
  - Aquatic focus, mechanism for science coordination and integration
  - Parallels between WRMP structure, but a bit more complex
  - Science management team and project work teams
    - A lot of technical work happens in project work teams

- Annual IEP work plan
  - Review, coordination, making sure there isn't overly redundant work, considerations for take of species
  - Most of the work in the plan is mandated (by biological opinions, etc.)
- Work plan centers around aquatic monitoring
  - Includes long-term core elements (i.e., water quality, food web sampling)
  - Non-IEP elements can be included in IEP work plan
- Fish Restoration Program
  - Work under IEP umbrella and want to coordinate with everyone else
  - Program also under EcoRestore umbrella
- EcoRestore
  - An initiative
  - Collection of many state sponsored efforts
- Tidal wetland restoration is a management focus because of the factors that are likely contributing to low fish abundance
  - Wetland restoration meant to help with food web
- Before/After restoration monitoring
  - Might be useful for WRMP monitoring
- Monitoring guidance
  - Think of capacity of wetland for species we want to benefit
  - And opportunity to access those resources
  - Metrics: primary, triggered, pre-defining special studies
- Fish restoration program
  - Monitoring some of the sites in the monitoring site network memo
- There is other monitoring in the region as well
  - Vegetation mapping, plant alliances
  - Huge management concern of thinking of invasive species in the delta
- WRMP and upper estuary
  - A lot of management questions related to water management and food web for fish
  - Think confluence is where OLU should be, from terrestrial perspective current OLU works
- VegCAMP-mapping some of the WRMP sites already
- Coordinate about potential for incidental take
- There are other projects not under the fish restoration program that have their own monitoring as well

#### Discussion:

- Stacy will send resources to Sasha/Alex.
- VegCAMP does full marsh mapping, other studies that look just at floating veg, fish restoration program does bathymetry and drone flights after restoration every 3 years over all their sites, all are pretty new, at some point will all be available to public eventually
  - Start with talking to landowners because they will know what data there is
- A brand-new research and monitoring tool was just released by the Delta Science Program. This covers Suisun and in theory has the potential to be expanded or crosswalked to include the entire estuary. <https://sciencetracker.deltacouncil.ca.gov/>
- Important to consider coordination, if we can figure out ways to gradually increase coordination between upper and lower estuary

- Delta science tracker recently released by delta science program, example of how to get coordinated scientific information in one place, in theory could be crosswalked with similar product for the bay, something WRMP could potentially consider as one model for publicly available data
- Encourage WRMP to explore ways to complement and sync up with data collection that's already happening with FRP (fish restoration program)
- Everything in delta fish focused-WRMP can benefit from those SOPs and extend downstream
- Rest of framework focused on restoration and climate change
- Consider w/ long-term work plan-what science could be brought up/down stream and where can we crosswalk
- Can reach out to Stacy with more questions: [stacy.sherman@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:stacy.sherman@wildlife.ca.gov)

John Bourgeois: Thank you Stacy -- is there somewhere I can see more detail on the monitoring guidance (hypotheses and metrics) you flashed up there?

Question:

Comment from chat: i am wondering if Stacy can say more about restoration in Suisun- are there attempts to incorporate private lands (duck clubs-willing sellers) into the restoration plan/goals?

### **Upcoming SC Meetings**

June 22: 10am-12pm

September 28: 10am-12pm

December 12: 1pm-3pm