



bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

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THE SANTA MONICA BAY RESTORATION COMMISSION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Ambrose called the meeting to order on December 6, 2011 at 10:00am in ECC 1857, University Hall, Loyola Marymount University, 1 LMU Drive, Westchester, CA 90045. Round robin introductions followed.

TAC Members

Rich Ambrose (Chair)	Present
Steve Bay (Vice Chair)	Present
Dave Caron	Absent
Gerry McGowen (Alternate for Mas Dojiri)	Present
Rainer Hoenicke	Present
Karen Martin	Present (arrived at 12:00 Noon)
Dan Pondella	Absent

Staff Present

Guangyu Wang, Deputy Director
Lia Protopapadakis, Marine Scientist & Project Manager

Members of the Public

Bridget Seegers, USC
Joe Gully, LACSD

PUBLIC FORUM

Members of the public and representatives of organizations/agencies wishing to comment must fill out a comment card at the meeting and will be allowed up to 3 minutes to address the Committee and to provide public testimony on items not otherwise on the agenda. Speaker time may be reduced depending on the number of speakers or otherwise at the discretion of the TAC Chair.

Joe Gully: Announced that the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) will be having their 2012 annual meeting in Long Beach. Joe and Steve Bay are on the planning committee and they are looking for special symposium ideas from their partners.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- a. Order of the Agenda: Items 5 will be taken up before Item 4.
- b. Approval of Meeting Minutes: The TAC approved the meeting minutes with a few minor edits.
- c. Reports from the Chair, Subcommittees, and Staff

Chair Report. Steve attended the previous Governing Board meeting in Rich's place. There were no new developments relating to the TAC activities to report.

Subcommittee Report: Lia gave the MRAC chair report. The MRAC meeting had to be rescheduled because it was not properly publically noticed. The rescheduled meeting will be on Monday, December 19, 2011. The MRAC is moving forward with developing

our mission: to restore and enhance the santa monica bay through actions and partnerships that improve water quality, conserve and rehabilitate natural resources, and protect the bay's benefits and values



recommendations for assigning port mitigation credits for lowland and upper intertidal wetland habitats.

Staff Report. SMBRF has completed the Ballona Baseline Monitoring Report. The TAC requested to receive a digital copy when it is distributed. The Governing Board adopted a revised Memorandum of Understanding. SMBRC hosted the Association of National Estuary Programs directors meeting in September. Guangyu thanked TAC members that participated and noted that the directors were very impressed. At their next meeting, the Governing Board will consider changes to the Calabasas Trash Screen project, previously approved for Prop 84 funding.

- d. Member Comment (*TAC members may wish to comment on issues not otherwise on the agenda.*)

Rich announced that the MPA Monitoring Enterprise is conducting a study on Best Professional Judgment, to develop recommendations for best practices. They are holding two workshops, one in January and one in the spring. The final report may be finished in the summer of 2012. Rich recommended inviting them to present their findings to the TAC in the fall.

Public Comment: None

AGENDA ITEM 5. Tools and protocol to monitor and evaluate LID project performance – San Francisco Bay approach (Rainer Hoenicke)

Rainer discussed Low Impact Development (LID) projects in the San Francisco Bay area, strategies that inform project design, and ideas about monitoring these projects based on lessons learned. Conclusions drawn include:

- It doesn't make sense to have every project generate tons of data. Monitoring can be done on subset of projects that all have different characteristics (different soils, different design features) to avoid repetition. Cumulative effects of similar projects in similar soils can be forecasted based on the monitoring data.
- Knowing the soils underneath the project is critical for effective project design. Project design should also account for monitoring logistics (such as detection level and sampling location).
- Hydrology (volume entering vs volume leaving site) is the most important piece of data to collect. Monitoring should also collect data to evaluate performance of project related to multiple goals of project (ie if reducing peak flow is a goal, this should be measured).
- The 3-year time-frame facing most grant-funded LID projects does not allow for proper monitoring of long-term benefits of these projects.

Discussion. The TAC identified two issues: 1) collecting better monitoring data for the recently approved Prop 84 projects and 2) developing a regional-scale monitoring plan in the longer-term.

A framework for monitoring Prop 84 projects needs to include recommendations on experimental design, monitoring parameters, data management, and reporting. Selected parameters should at minimum include measurements of change in runoff and TMDL constituents based on project goals. Additional parameters should be widely applicable across projects, and could reflect additional goals or expected benefits of the project. Data should be in a standardized and pre-existing format if available. A written summary should identify changes due to the project and assess effectiveness based on the project goals. As this framework is developed, effort should be taken to reach out to other local entities that are funding LID projects. City storm water management and public works divisions should be able to help answer questions about parameters, experimental design, and monitoring protocols.

The TAC discussed the challenge of paying for effective monitoring of LID projects given the restrictions on the funds for the projects, potential sources of funding for long-term strategic monitoring, and approaches for collecting region-wide and long-term monitoring data. They

concluded that money from many different sources would have to be funneled into one-place. This will require overcoming institutional barriers and identifying an entity that is willing and able to play the central organizing role. The local IRWMPs and the Storm Water Monitoring Coalition have some money that could be spend on regional-LID monitoring. The California Water and Land Use Partnership is an inactive body of folks engaged and knowledgeable about LID. The SMBRC Governing Board could recommend additional partners or avenues for funding. Another idea was to create incentives for LID projects and storm water agencies to work together on monitoring. Monitoring LID projects could be included in future permits.

Staff will compile examples of previous Prop 84 monitoring data and reports, and discuss internally possible approaches to developing the framework and establishing a long-term LID coalition. Staff will put this item for discussion on the next TAC meeting.

Public Comment: None

AGENDA ITEM #4. Habitat Health Assessment Indicator and Index Development (Guangyu Wang).

Last December the TAC heard presentations on several different indexes already in existence. The TAC recommended that staff develop indexes for remaining habitats. SMBRF funded further development of rocky intertidal, pelagic, and sandy beach indicators. The work on the pelagic index is ready to present. Burt Jones' lab developed it. His student Bridget Seegers came to give a short presentation. Then Karen will explain the progress made by the Beach Metric Working Group.

Pelagic Index. The index is based on the Water Quality portion of the EPA's National Coastal Condition Report (NCCR). This index was selected as the model because it had regionally specific numeric thresholds indentified for each parameter. Data came from the Central Bight Cooperative Water Quality Survey and the California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations (CalCOFI). The biggest challenge was sparse data. Some of the more obvious trends in the data are actually driven by the availability of data. Better spatial and temporal water quality sampling coverage would improve confidence and allow finer-scale assessments of hotspots within the Bay. Adding biological parameters will allow index to assess habitat health not just water quality.

Discussion. The TAC recognized that this index is an important first step. However, they identified three issues with the index: 1) choice of parameters, 2) choice of thresholds, and 3) method of combining the values. The parameters and thresholds identified in the NCCR are most likely designed for enclosed bays and estuaries, not open systems subject to upwelling. A future index should be able to distinguish the signal from a natural process, such as upwelling, from the signal from an unnatural event. It should also be able to detect changes in upwelling frequency, strength, and duration. Additional parameters to consider are pH, fish larvae, N:P ratio, DDT and PCBs, and trash. Additional descriptive parameters would be those describing the "ocean climate," such as El Niño/La Niña conditions, PDO, and upwelling. Standards or thresholds can be taken from the Ocean Plan.

Public Comment. Joe Gully stated that the index in its current state did a reasonable job at assessing habitat quality in the sense that it measured whether or not conditions were good for biology (i.e. no dead zones, not eutrophic, etc.). As such, it could be used urge the LACSD board to collect new data in the Central Bight Survey, such as nutrients.

Sandy Beach Assessment. Karen discussed the progress made by the Beach Metric Working Group, to develop an index for assessing the health of sandy beaches. While there are many challenges to doing this work in this habitat and some possible unintended consequences, there are also significant benefits, such as informing planning decisions. The Beach Metric Working Group is composed of an assortment of plant, bird, and animal specialists, economists, surfers, agency reps, and others. The Working Group has brainstormed possible indicators that could be used in an index. Next, they will select a few more natural beaches in southern California

and identify the characteristics that point to better health and which can be used as indicators. They plan to build a score card to rate beaches that is simple enough for citizen scientists to do.

Habitat Health Assessment Framework. Guanyu reviewed the changes made to the draft framework, which were based on the discussion at the September TAC meeting. He noted that he filled in the sandy beach habitat framework with the list from the Beach Metric Working Group as a way of testing the framework and starting the discussion.

Discussion. The TAC recommended keeping different categories of indicators separate. They identified three: indicators that 1) illustrate the physical aspect of the habitat (these also establish context and set expectations); 2) describe the status or condition of the habitat (these are most indicative of health); and 3) measure stressors (these are explanatory). They also warned that in some cases goals listed in our Restoration Plan are a combination of goals and management actions, and suggested being careful to keep these separate moving forward. They thought that including numerical targets is very useful. Staff will work with members with relevant expertise and interest to fill out framework for each habitat. These drafts will be sent to the entire TAC to review in advance of the March meeting.

Public Comment. None

AGENDA ITEM #6. TAC Membership and Structure

6a) Renewals. In accordance with the SMBRC Memorandum of Understanding and the staff policy on TAC membership, the TAC voted to recommend that the Governing Board reappoint the following TAC members: Dr. Richard Ambrose, Steve Bay M.S., Dr. David Caron, Dr. Mas Dojiri, Dr. Rainer Hoenicke, Dr. Karen Martin, and Dr. Dan Pondella; and retain Dr. Richard Ambrose as the TAC Chair. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote. The item will be on the Governing Board's February agenda.

6b) Vacant Seats. Three members of the TAC will not be returning in 2012. The TAC voted to recommend that the Governing Board appoint Dr. John Dorsey and Dr. Terrie Hogue as new members of the TAC. Dr. John Dorsey served as the chair of the old TAC (prior to 2008), is currently a professor at LMU, and has been conducting relevant research on bacteria loading in the Ballona Wetlands in cooperation with SMBRF's Ballona Team. Dr. Terrie Hogue is a professor at UCLA, was a principal investigator on the Ballona water budget study, and is interested in surface water problems in urban areas. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote. The item will be on the Governing Board's February agenda.

The TAC discussed possible candidates with oceanographic expertise. The TAC recommended looking for someone with connections to SCCOOS, CalCOFI, or NOAA. SCCOOS in particular has a mandate to make their work relevant to stakeholders such as SMBRC. Keith Stolzenbach, Eric Terrill, and Libe Washburn were mentioned. The TAC recommended staff explore the enthusiasm level of these potential candidates.

The TAC discussed options for continuing to engage researchers with social science and economics expertise. They recommended staff draft a charter for a working group/subcommittee on socio-economics. Convening a working group/subcommittee would give staff a venue to begin working on several benefits and values studies, give participants a better sense of their value, and connect SMBRC with the local social science community. Eventually, one of these people may express an interest in joining the TAC. The TAC suggested that this group start off as an informal working group to minimize administrative work.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

To accommodate the schedules of new members, the March and June meetings have not yet been scheduled. Dates will be selected before the end of the year and will be posted on the SMBRC website (www.smbrc.ca.gov). The meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.