



bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

santa monica bay restoration commission 320 west 4th street, ste 200; los angeles, california 90013
213/576-6615 phone 213/576-6646 fax www.smbrc.ca.gov

THE SANTA MONICA BAY RESTORATION COMMISSION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Contact: 310-953-7149 or lprotopapadakis@santamonicaabay.org

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Rich Ambrose called the meeting to order on March 14, 2012 at 9:40am in the ECC 1857 room at Loyola Marymount University, 1 LMU Drive, Westchester, CA. Introductions followed.

TAC Members

Rich Ambrose (Chair)	Present
Steve Bay (Vice Chair)	Present
Dave Caron	Absent
Mas Dojiri	Present
John Dorsey	Present
Rainer Hoenicke	Absent
Terrie Hogue	Present
Karen Martin	Absent
Dan Pondella	Present

Staff Present

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

Members of the Public

Joe Gully, LACSD
Eric Miller, MBC

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.

There was no public comment.

GENERAL BUSINESS

a. Order of the Agenda.

The draft summary of the last meeting was not mailed to TAC members in advance of today's meeting. Approval of the last meeting's summary moved to the end of the agenda.

b. Reports from the Chair, Subcommittees, and Staff

Report from the Chair: The last Governing Board meeting focused on approving official changes to the structure of SMBRC and SMBRF. SMBRC's organizational documents have not been updated, even as the SMBRC has grown. The changes made by the GB serve to update SMBRC's organizational documents to reflect how SMBRC is currently operating.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Ballona Restoration Project is now being developed. The Science Advisory Committee that assisted in developing the restoration project was reconvened to assist with developing the DEIR. The exact role of the SAC in this new phase has yet to be determined. However, it is possible that the SAC will be asked to provide input on the details of the project that have not yet been determined.

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





bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

santa monica bay restoration commission 320 west 4th street, ste 200; los angeles, california 90013
213/576-6615 phone 213/576-6646 fax www.smbrc.ca.gov

Rich attended an NCES workshop on using expert judgment when determining the health of an ecosystem. He gave a presentation on the State of the Bay's attempt at this and discussed what we did well and what we could have improved upon. Some things we did are now standard, such as using the color bar to present the information. However, other things we did are cutting edge, such as expressing the range in condition, addressing uncertainty, and using assessment as a tool to develop better data. The only other example of an assessment that addressed uncertainty came from Australia. They did this by discussing the availability of the data and the certainty of the connection between the data you have and the health assessment. Another piece was displaying the assessments and the variation in condition spatially. This ecosystem health assessment effort is ongoing and will ultimately result in a report on Best Practices. Reasons to do this include improved transparency, consistency over time, and continuity between generations.

Rich also attended a meeting on rocky intertidal health assessments, sponsored by SMBRC and MARINE. The idea is to have experts identify indicators of disturbance based on the data. Participants used a range of approaches but based their assessments on some common indicators. The continuing challenge will be figuring out how to distinguish between anthropogenic disturbance and natural disturbance. The MARINE data does contain information about what may be the key indicators that distinguish between anthropogenic and natural disturbance. For example, the methods used are best suited to assessing sessile species, while motile species, which are likely more sensitive to human disturbance, are not captured as well by these methods. A related challenge is establishing expectations for health in this habitat based on the natural disturbance regime and range in habitat type. This requires identifying reference sites for different disturbance regimes in each region along the coast. This is especially challenging in Southern California, when there are 50 years of anthropogenic disturbances and even little used sites are more disturbed than high use sites in Northern California. Also, the methods currently used are not well suited for boulder and cobble fields, which are more common in southern California.

Report from the Subcommittee: The MRAC is working on a literature review and white paper related to the Ballona Wetlands restoration. The project will investigate how coastal vegetated marsh habitat above the mean high water line can provide benefits to species affected by development of subtidal coastal embayments. This work will inform compensatory mitigation banking. The SMBRF has hired a research assistant to conduct the literature review and draft the white paper. The Port of Los Angeles, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and SMBRC are interested in the results because it could provide the basis for allowing Port mitigation money to be spent on the restoration of Ballona Wetlands, the restoration of which was designed to meet regional wetland needs.

Dan attended the Area of Special Biological Significance Group meeting for Bight '08/ '13. They are also interested in how best professional judgment can be incorporated into the assessment of nearshore rocky reefs. SCCWRP is willing to fund a workshop, similar to the MARINE workshops on rocky intertidal health, to develop an index for assessing rocky reef health.

The Montrose Settlements Restoration Program (MSRP) are now in phase 2 and are focusing on restoring lost fishing opportunity caused by the contamination of the Palos Verdes Shelf. One project they will fund is the removal of urchin's from overrun kelp habitat. The other is for the creation of artificial reef structure both near fishing piers and in places that have been buried by landslides. They are responding to public comment and will be moving forward in the late spring/ early summer.

Report from SMBRC staff. SMBRF partnered with LMU's Center of Urban Resilience to host a symposium on Ballona and other coastal wetlands with great success. SMBRC is supporting the Beach Ecology Working Group to identify indicators and collect data for a Beach Habitat Health Assessment. They asked staff to speak to a related group, the Beach Ecology Coalition, about the habitat health assessment and how it will be used. The Working Group is making a score sheet based on best professional judgment and planning a field trip to test it at some beaches in Santa Monica Bay. SMBRC submitted a proposal for a special platform session on the Santa Monica

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





bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

santa monica bay restoration commission 320 west 4th street, ste 200; los angeles, california 90013
213/576-6615 phone 213/576-6646 fax www.smbrc.ca.gov

Bay for the Society for Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry's annual meeting at the Long Beach Convention Center on November 11 to the 15th. There will be a call for submission of papers and posters for the platform sessions. This special session focused on Santa Monica Bay will showcase the current work on diverse topics. SMBRC hopes TAC members will submit for it. Staff is happy to welcome the two new TAC members, Dr. John Dorsey (a professor at LMU studying microbial dynamics in wetlands) and Dr. Terrie Hogue (a professor at UCLA studying hydrological processes). There is still an open seat, vacated by Burt Jones, who was our resident oceanographer and climate change/harmful algal bloom expert. Staff will consider filling this seat over the course of the year, Tom Ford will be presenting at SERCAL about the kelp restoration work in May. The Army Corp of engineers has reasserted their interest in moving forward with their feasibility analysis of removing Ringe Dam. The project will have to cost less than \$3 million and be completed in two to three years, and they will have to convince General Walsh that the project is worth it. Finally, SMBRC's newly re-vamped Watershed Advisory Council met in February to provide comments on future directions for the SMBRC. Some of these comments that were particularly relevant to the TAC include studying the relative contributions of natural sources to stormwater pollutants, monitoring the MS4 permits for effectiveness, understanding the social and economic costs and benefits of water quality projects, and the comprehensive monitoring program. Other topics mentioned include sea otters, sharing information about the fish die-off in King Harbor, and artificial reefs. Moving forward, the staff may ask some members of this group to interact with the TAC regarding some of these issues.

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

John Dorsey. The State Water Resources Control Board reconvened the Clean Beach Task Force to review proposals funded under Proposition 84 to get beaches to meet bacterial standards.

AGENDA ITEM 4. Title: Monitoring Plan Framework for Prop 84 Funded Projects

Background. The TAC also reviews Proposition 84 proposals specific to the Santa Monica Bay. SMBRC would like the TAC to develop a consistent framework for monitoring these proposals to improve future projects and assist in the evaluation of future proposals. Ultimately, the SMBRC would like to develop a strategic regional monitoring plan for similar projects.

Presentation. Staff developed background documents for the TAC using previous and ongoing projects to provide examples of past monitoring plans, a draft monitoring framework based on the EPA's urban monitoring program, and a draft proposal for developing a strategic regional monitoring plan.

Discussion. The TAC was concerned that the framework components were unclear and often lumped inappropriately. They recommended organizing the framework as a worksheet that includes:

- The Monitoring Plan Elements
- A description of each Element, and
- Examples of how each element should be filled in for each type of project.

The elements that should be included are:

- The Project Goal (taken from the proposal)
- The Monitoring Goal
- Monitoring Strategy/ Sampling Design
- Methods to be used (research question, sampling design, data analysis, statistical approach)
- Quality Assurance Project Plan and Data Management Plan
- Project Assessment/ Performance Criteria
- Report Guidelines (not part of the worksheet, but part of the monitoring plan framework).

They stressed that monitoring plans should be allowed to be adjusted if necessary based on sampling conditions (i.e. the plan calls for measuring inflow and outflow, but there was no rain in the

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





bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

santa monica bay restoration commission 320 west 4th street, ste 200; los angeles, california 90013
213/576-6615 phone 213/576-6646 fax www.smbrc.ca.gov

sampling period). However, changes should be made only after consulting with SMBRC and/or the TAC.

Next Steps. At the next TAC meeting, staff will revise the framework. Staff will also categorize the projects based on project type, geology, and location; and create a map funded projects categorized by type. Strategic regional monitoring may be possible through the MS4 permits.

Public Comment: None

AGENDA ITEM 5. Title: Review Draft Habitat Assessment Framework for Each Habitat Type Presentation. After the December meeting, staff asked internal and external experts to fill in the framework for a particular habitat. This was accomplished and the updated framework includes their input.

Discussion. In the next six months, the Bight '13 planning process will get underway and if the resources can be found, it may be possible to incorporate these habitat assessments, particularly for wetlands, soft bottom, rocky reefs, and maybe sandy beaches. SMBRC and the TAC need to finalize and populate the framework in the next six months. TAC members that filled out the framework mentioned that they struggled with selecting indicators, but that specific is better and this should be emphasized to others attempting to fill in the framework. Other points raised include:

- Whether or not to combine beaches and dunes and/or combine sea grass with either rocky reef or rock intertidal. They thought that isolating habitats which are especially at risk focuses more attention to the issues facing them and is therefore valuable to do.
- Sea grasses include three different species, all with different issues. Staff should consider how each of these should be included.
- Soft-bottom should include harbors, bays, and marinas in addition to the offshore areas used in the 2010 State of the Bay Report.
- Fish were not included as an indicator in sandy beach habitat and should be as these fish are of growing interest.
- A section on the connections between habitats should be included.
- Management actions and driving forces should be discussed in the overall framework and habitat description.
- Indicators related to management actions in the Wetlands sheet are geographically specific, but should be generalized across the entire bay.

Feedback on specific aspects of the framework include:

- Eliminating the Management Actions column from the indicator frameworks
- Moving the Indicator column to directly follow the Expectations column, followed by the Thresholds and Targets column.
- Adding a data availability checkbox.
- The Expectations column is where "Green" and trends are defined.
- Thresholds are numerical; targets are descriptive
- Change "Habitat Availability" to "Habitat Extent & Vulnerability"
- Re-word the "Structure and Disturbance" description to read "physical, chemical, biological, properties that impact ecological condition of a habitat"

Public Comment: None

AGENDA ITEM 1d): Approval of Meeting Minutes.
The minutes were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, June 19, 2012 at 9:30am. Other upcoming meeting

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





bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

santa monica bay restoration commission 🌿 320 west 4th street, ste 200; los angeles, california 90013
213/576-6615 phone 🌿 213/576-6646 fax 🌿 www.smbrc.ca.gov

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 3:30pm.

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

