

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE COMMISSION OF
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATER RESEARCH PROJECT AUTHORITY**

**HELD AT THE OFFICES OF THE AUTHORITY
7171 Fenwick Lane, Westminster, California**

**December 8, 2006
9:30 a.m.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Diego Cadena - *Los Angeles County Department of Public Works*
Chris Crompton - *County of Orange (Acting)*
Mas Dojiri - *City of Los Angeles*
Robert Ghirelli - *Orange County Sanitation District*
Janet Hashimoto - *US Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX*
Gerhardt Hubner - *Ventura County Watershed Protection District*
Darrin Polhemus - *State Water Resources Control Board*
Deborah Smith - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region*
James Stahl - *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*
Cid Tesoro - *County of San Diego*
Gerard Thibeault - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region*

STAFF PRESENT

Stephen Weisberg - *Executive Director*
B. Richard Marsh - *Legal Counsel*
Ken Schiff - *Deputy Director*
Martha Sutula - *Principal Investigator*
Art Barnett - *Principal Investigator*
Steve Bay - *Principal Investigator*
Eric Stein - *Principal Investigator*
Karlene Miller - *Administrative Analyst*

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael Lyons - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region*
Dave Montagne - *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*
John Robertus - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region*

Commission Chair Polhemus called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM. Roll call was taken.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 8, 2006**
- 2. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2006**
- 3. QUARTERLY STATEMENT OF INVESTMENTS AT SEPTEMBER 30, 2006**

4. MINUTES OF CTAG MEETINGS OF AUGUST 9, 2006

5. 2006 AUDIT

Approval of the September 8, 2006 Commission minutes was tabled to the next Commission meeting due to a missing page on the version that was distributed prior to the meeting. Commissioner Polhemus motioned for approval of consent items 2 through 5, which was seconded by Commissioner Stahl. These consent items were unanimously approved.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Administrative Report began with a progress report on the Agency's upcoming move to a new facility in Costa Mesa. He indicated that construction was on track, with an anticipated move-in date of February 2, 2007. Dr. Weisberg next provided a progress report on the Agency's Annual Report, which he indicated consists of 25 articles and has a projected release date of January 12, 2007. Lastly, he addressed the fiscal health of the organization, stating that the organization was in good financial condition despite the expenditures necessary for construction and relocation to the new facility. He also acknowledged Bryan Nece, Administrative Officer, for an exception-free fiscal audit for the seventh year in a row.

The Executive Director's Technical Report covered four items. First, Dr. Weisberg provided a progress update on the Bight'03 Regional Monitoring Program. Project reports on Toxicity and Sediment Chemistry have been completed while Benthic Infauna, Water Quality and Microbiology will be completed within the next several months, and the final Synthesis Report that integrates all aspects of the Regional Monitoring Program is expected to be completed in April. Dr. Weisberg's second technical item highlighted the Agency's participation with the Southern California Stormwater Monitoring Coalition (SMC). The SMC is comprised of nine southern California Municipal Stormwater NPDES principal permittees, all three Regional Water Quality Control Boards and SCCWRP. He stated that the SMC had been successful enough that the original members intend to extend their MOU for another five-year term and three new members, the State Water Resources Control Board, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and Caltrans, will be joining the Coalition. The third technical item provided an update of responses to SCCWRP's upcoming Epidemiology Study. The study, designed to assess the risk of swimming-related illnesses at nonpoint source contaminated beaches, had been drawing international attention. The Agency's encouragement of collaboration for testing new measures of fecal contamination was drawing researchers and resources from across the country to southern California. Dr. Weisberg next responded to a question about SCCWRP's assistance to the City of Los Angeles in assessing the effects of their diversion of the 5-mile Hyperion Treatment Plant outfall for two weeks in November. Commissioner Dojiri indicated the diversion to the 1-mile emergency outfall was necessary to allow inspection of the 5-mile outfall structure, which appeared to be in relatively good condition. Early monitoring results indicated that the outfall plume moved in a southwesterly direction (away from the beach), driven largely by offshore Santa Ana winds.

7. CTAG REPORT

Michael Lyons presented a summary of the Commissioner's Technical Advisory Committee (CTAG) meeting from November 16, 2007. The November CTAG meeting was used for research planning activities for the Agency's next Fiscal Year. One representative of each wastewater, stormwater, and regulatory member agencies presented a list of upcoming special

studies and research topics assembled by the respective groups. Mr. Lyons then listed seven topic areas common to all of the group lists and of greatest interest to the CTAG members. He indicated that SCCWRP was conducting or planning research in all seven topic areas. Finally, he stated that CTAG was split on recommendations for the SCCWRP logo (see Agenda item #8).

8. SCCWRP LOGO

Dr. Weisberg briefed the Commission on the development of a new logo for the Agency. At the last Commission meeting, the Executive Director suggested that if SCCWRP were going to redesign its logo or change its name, the best time to do so would be coincident with the move, when the Agency would be printing new letterhead and business cards. He had asked the Commission and CTAG for input regarding several alternative designs. He indicated that SCCWRP staff and CTAG were both evenly split between two alternative designs. The Commission then engaged in a discussion regarding size, shape, text, and symbology. Commissioner Polhemus motioned for adoption of an oval-shaped logo with the Agency's full name spelled out around the border enclosing the Agency's acronym accompanied by a tree, two birds, and two to three fish, with allowances for artistic license in size and arrangement of the biological elements. Commissioner Stahl seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

9. CONTRACT APPROVAL

The Executive Director requested that the Commission approve resolutions regarding the following contracts that would be offered to the Agency.

- 1) State Water Resources Control Board (\$400,000)
Ensuring Biological Integrity of Nonperennial Streams
- 2) State Water Resources Control Board (\$860,000)
Mapping Wetland and Riparian Habitats in Southern California Coastal Watersheds
- 3) State Water Resources Control Board (\$907,440)
Development of Tools for Hydromodification Assessment and Management
- 4) State Water Resources Control Board (\$989,000)
Creating Tools for Numeric Nutrient Criteria and TMDL Development in San Diego Coastal Lagoons
- 5) State Water Resources Control Board (\$1,476,400)
Development of Multimetric Tools for Setting Numeric Nutrient Targets, Including a Periphyton IBI
- 6) State Water Resources Control Board (\$160,000)
CIWQS Review Panel
- 7) Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (\$1,000,000)
Source Identification Of Bacteria In Escondido And Ramirez Canyon Creeks.

Upon the motion of Commissioner Dojiri, seconded by Commissioner Stahl, the contracts were unanimously approved by Resolution, with Commissioners Hashimoto and Polhemus abstaining on contracts 1 through 7 and Commissioner Cadena abstaining on item 7.

As an informational item, Dr. Weisberg described contracts with value of \$250,000 or less that the Authority has accepted or indicated a willingness to accept. While the governing agreement of SCCWRP requires no Commission action on these, the contracts were described to inform and ensure that the direction of the Authority's work is consistent with the desires of the Commission.

- 8) Moss Landing Marine Labs (\$10,000)
SWAMP Database Program
- 9) USC (\$26,437)
Ballona Creek Modeling Study
- 10) County of San Diego (\$15,500)
Natural Loadings Study
- 11) Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council (\$34,272)
San Gabriel River Regional Monitoring Program

There were no objections to any of these contracts.

10. NUTRIENT AND EUTROPHICATION RESEARCH

The Executive Director presented an overview of the Agency's activities to establish a scientific foundation for nutrient criteria in freshwater and estuarine habitats. He began by describing the challenges to developing nutrient criteria, which result from nutrient concentrations being highly variable, often poorly related to endpoints like algal production, and confusion about which nutrient constituent is most important. He further indicated that it was even unclear whether concentration or load is the most important factor to regulate. Dr. Weisberg outlined an approach for determining nutrient criteria that focuses on multiple lines of evidence, including measurement of stressors and beneficial use endpoints that are affected by nutrients. Beneficial use endpoints include parameters such as algal biomass, water column oxygen levels and periphyton species composition. Dr. Weisberg highlighted SCCWRP's research efforts in the development of a biotic index for interpretation of periphyton species data. He also indicated that he anticipates considerable interaction with other organizations in conducting the Agency's nutrient research activities. SCCWRP staff had been recruited to serve on the EPA's National Nutrient Criteria Development Team, were serving as NOAA's California lead for their National Eutrophication Report to Congress, were collaborating with California's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP), and were participating in developing the science for several local nutrient-related TMDLs.

11. HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS

The Executive Director presented SCCWRP's recent research activities on harmful algal blooms (HABs). Despite HABs being a federal research priority, little is known about HABs in southern California. Dr. Weisberg described the Agency's current approach, which involved partnering with the University of Southern California (USC) through the Bight'03 Regional Monitoring Program and then extending this research through a grant from NOAA's Monitoring and Event Response for Harmful Algal Blooms (MERHAB) Program. Dr. Weisberg showed some of the results for density of *Pseudonitzschia* spp., a planktonic diatom that produces domoic acid which can produce disorientation in mammals and seabirds (sometimes referred to as Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning). Early results indicated that some of the highest concentrations on the entire west coast have been observed in San Pedro Bay. Moreover, correlations have been observed between domoic acid concentrations in nearshore marine waters and the blood of

pinnipeds and pelicans admitted to nearby marine mammal care centers. He indicated that these preliminary results have encouraged the Agency to continue this research in an attempt to determine if the increased domoic acid concentrations are a result of anthropogenic activities or simply natural perturbations in the nutrient cycle. To accomplish this task, the Agency will share a post-doctoral researcher with USC to expand activities both in the lab and in the field for the next two years.

12. FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

At the September Commission meeting, the Commission expressed its desire to hold a five-year strategic planning meeting. Subsequently, Dr. Weisberg met with the Commission Chair and Vice-Chair to begin organizing such a meeting. He presented the outcome of that discussion to the Commission for their approval to move forward. Several process related issues were agreed upon by the Commission: 1) the meeting will require an entire day, which was scheduled for June 7 from 8:30-4:30; 2) the meeting will be held at the Agency's new facility in Costa Mesa; 3) the participants will include all Commissioners, alternate Commissioners, the Chair and Vice Chair of CTAG, and the Agency's Executive and Deputy Directors. Dr. Weisberg presented a tentative agenda that included: 1) internal and external performance assessments using a survey-based questionnaire; 2) future structure of the Commission; 3) Agency management structure; and 4) defining the target market for SCCWRP products and mechanisms to reach that market. The Commission agreed to the process as described and asked for two additional items. First, a subcommittee was formed to help with questionnaire development and administration; the subcommittee is comprised of Commissioners Dojiri (Chair), Ghirelli, Tesoro, and Smith. Second, the Commission recommended that the Agency pursue the use of a professional facilitator; the Commission was asked to provide names of potential candidates for this role.

13. FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The Commission requested updates regarding the following items: 1) strategic planning meeting coordination; 2) tour of the Agency's new facility; 3) an update on the Agency's wetlands research program; 4) an overview of the San Gabriel River Watershed monitoring program; and 5) a description of the epidemiology study that is planned for Doheny beach this summer.

14. OTHER BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Stahl announced his retirement, effective at the end of this year. He commented on his appreciation for SCCWRP's scientific integrity, organizational longevity, and commitment to the interface between science and management. Dr. Weisberg expressed the Agency's gratitude for Commissioner Stahl's contributions over the years. Commissioner Polhemus motioned for a resolution of gratitude on behalf of the organization. Commissioner Ghirelli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

15. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

16. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm until the next Commission meeting on March 9, 2007 at the Agency's new facility: 3535 Harbor Blvd., Suite 110, Costa Mesa, CA.

ATTEST:

Karlene Miller
Acting Secretary