

SCCWRP Review
Feb. 2014
An Overview For The
Commission of
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATER
RESEARCH PROJECT AUTHORITY

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(Chair) Dr. Jerry Schubel — Aquarium of the Pacific
Dr. Worth Nowlin — Texas A&M University
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Our Charge: Answer The Following 3 Questions

- What are the five biggest changes you would make if you were on the SCCWRP Commission?
- What are the five biggest changes you would make if you were SCCWRP's Executive Director?
- What are SCCWRP's five biggest assets or strategic advantages that you would be sure to preserve?

Our Answer To Question 1

5 Things We would Do If We Were On The SCCWRP Commission

- **Regional/National Focus:** Actively support the continued strong regional focus of SCCWRP on the Southern California Bight and its maintenance of relevant core scientific expertise that underpin SCCWRP as a model of success, one that has had national influence.
- **Consistency of Direction:** To ensure the development of sound policy and efficient commission meeting actions, each agency should promote and encourage consistent commissioner and/or alternate representation of its members for the benefit of SCCWRP's overall research agenda.
- **CTAG Representation:** Provide consistent agency representation and active participation through CTAG. Selection of appropriate CTAG representatives is critical to sustained success of research projects relevant to the southern California Bight.

Our Answer To Question 1

5 Things We would Do If We Were On The SCCWRP Commission

- **Collaboration of CTAG and SCCWRP:** Each agency should instruct its CTAG representative to work collectively and collaboratively with SCCWRP's executive director and senior science leadership team to develop a research plan that includes current and future research needs and ranks projects in relation to the needs of member agencies.
- **Core Funding:** Review on an ongoing basis, core funding from the agencies needed to address current and future research priorities identified by the Commission and CTAG, and seek better alignment of support where appropriate.

Our Answer To Question 2

5 Things We Would Change If We Were The Director of SCCWRP

- **Leadership:** Share more fully the ownership and leadership of SCCWRP with Department Heads and senior staff through improved open communication and expanded participation in decision-making; enhance the dissemination of information to staff and seek input through more frequent meetings with a two-way agenda.
- **Planning Process:** Engage more effectively the senior staff and CTAG in the research planning process. Develop a long-term research program in close collaboration with CTAG and SCCWRP senior staff. Expand the ownership of the research agenda.

Our Answer To Question 2

5 Things We Would Change If We Were The Director of SCCWRP

- **Focused Meetings:** Arrange focused meetings with groups of Commissioners by sector and by geography to address agency needs and opportunities as part of the research planning process.
- **Communication:** Maintain the current external communication strategy with the existing targeted audiences and enhance internal communication with staff and research partners at all organizational levels, particularly as it relates to maintaining research focus, partnership strategy, and future research initiatives.
- **Staff Relationships:** Review and take appropriate actions to improve some important personnel policies and practices—staffing decisions, clearer job descriptions, training support for certain skills, basis for terminations, and work-load issues of some staff. Help them to better understand the rationale for decisions.

Our Answer to Question 3

5 Biggest Assets or Strategic Advantages We Would Preserve

- **Leadership:** SCCWRP has benefited enormously from sustained strong leadership and management by the Executive Director and senior staff.
- **Network/Connections:** SCCWRP is unique in its ability to bring together important southern California Sectors of wastewater and stormwater management agencies and the state and federal regulatory communities to design and implement sound scientific research to assess the effects of discharges on water quality, aquatic resources, human health, and human uses for the Southern California Bight.

Our Answer to Question 3

5 Biggest Assets or Strategic Advantages We Would Preserve

- **Governance:** The SCCWRP governance structure incorporates representatives of the Sectors that result in sustainable core funding thus allowing credible, unbiased and balanced research on the marine and fresh water environments. SCCWRP maintains strict adherence to sound science and avoids any connection to policy-making and political considerations.
- **Scientific Credibility & Culture of Collaboration:** SCCWRP is a small agency that has had a disproportionately large impact on environmental decisions because of leveraging through partnerships. The credibility and collaborative nature of an outstanding scientific staff that produces with its partners research of consistently high quality is key to the continued success of SCCWRP
- **Scientific Focus:** SCCWRP's sustained focus on a set of themes relevant to its vision and mission within a well-defined geographic area has led to SCCWRP being viewed increasingly as a source of unbiased scientific information.

Some *Personal* Thoughts

- SCCWRP Is A Remarkable Organization
- 45 Years Of Relevance & Excellence
- Takes Outstanding Leadership, Management, & Governance
- Continuing Challenge To Maintain Credibility & Respect Of The Research Community
- Program vs. Series of Projects