

AGENDA ITEM #2

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

Friday, December 5, 2003
9:30 a.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Stan Martinson – *State Water Resources Control Board*
Gerard Thibeault - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region*
Arthur Coe - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region*
Dennis Dickerson - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region*
Mas Dojiri - *City of Los Angeles*
Bob Horvath - *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*
Robert Ghirelli - *Orange County Sanitation District*

STAFF PRESENT

Stephen Weisberg – *Executive Director*
Kenneth Schiff – *Deputy Director*
Bryan Nece – *Administrative Officer*
B. Richard Marsh – *Legal Counsel*
Steve Bay - *Principal Investigator*
Larry Cooper - *Principal Investigator*
Steve Bay - *Principal Investigator*
Eric Stein - *Principal Investigator*

OTHERS PRESENT

Joe Meistrell – *Los Angeles County Sanitation District*
Dave Montagne - *Los Angeles County Sanitation District*
Mike Moore – *Orange County Sanitation District*
George Robertson - *Orange County Sanitation District*
Rebecca Smythe – *NOAA*
William Nolte – *Citizen*

Commission Chair Dickerson called the meeting to order at 9:35 am. The Administrative Officer took roll, with Commissioners Martinson, Thibeault, Dickerson, Dojiri, Horvath, and Ghirelli being present.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 12, 2003
2. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2003
3. QUARTERLY STATEMENT OF INVESTMENTS AT SEPTEMBER 30, 2003

4. MINUTES OF CTAG MEETING OF AUGUST 20, 2003

Commissioner Ghirelli motioned for approval of the consent agenda. Commissioner Thibeault seconded the motion and the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

At 9:40 Commissioner Coe arrived.

REGULAR AGENDA

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Weisberg announced that the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works had recently received approval from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to become an Associate Member of SCCWRP. He next described progress on preparation of the biennial report, saying that he expected to have about 27 articles. The first set of articles has already been made available to CTAG members for review, with publication of the report scheduled for December 2004. Dr. Weisberg next reported on success of SCCWRP's Mission Bay Epidemiology study that was conducted this summer. He indicated that the targeted number of recruited swimmers was met. He stated that SCCWRP's epidemiology study is unique because it is the first to be conducted in an embayment system, only the second study to be conducted where urban runoff is the primary source of contamination and one of the first epidemiology studies to include measurement of new microbiological indicators, such as phage and viruses.

6. CTAG REPORT

Michael Lyons reported that CTAG held its regularly scheduled meeting on November 19th, at which George Robertson and Mike Lyons were elected the new Chair and Co-Chair, respectively. At that meeting, CTAG focused their discussion on the special studies that SCCWRP would be doing in response to the extensive fires throughout southern California. He also reported that CTAG discussed CalEPA's Environmental Protection Indicators (EPIC) program, as well as whether SCCWRP should undertake its own report card for southern California. The CTAG recommendation was that a report card was needed, though SCCWRP was encouraged to coordinate with the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, who several CTAG members believed were planning a report card.

7. CONTRACT APPROVAL

The Executive Director requested that the Commission approve a resolution regarding the following contract that would be offered to the Authority.

- 1) State Water Resources Control Board (\$185,000)
Source Identification of Pesticides

Upon the motion of Commissioner Coe and seconded by Commissioner Dojiri, this contract was approved, with Commissioner Thibeault abstaining

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

- 2) South Orange County Wastewater Authority (\$91,960)
San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (\$33,000)
City of Oceanside (\$40,532)
City of San Diego (\$25,000)
Thrifty Oil – SARWQCB SEP (\$15,000)

Support for Bight'03 Regional Survey Bight'03

- 3) Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (\$180,599)
Measuring Load Allocations – Natural Drainages
- 4) George Mason University (\$20,000)
Watershed Condition Assessments
- 5) Bell Industries (\$9,000)
BASF Corporation (\$9,000)
Haagen Company (\$9,000)
Newport Bay Food Web Study
- 6) Port of Long Beach (\$100,000)
Contaminated Sediment Task Force Strategy Report
- 7) State Health Service (\$100,000)
Coastal Advisory Database
- 8) NOAA (\$20,000)
Biogeographic Assessment of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

There were no objections to any of these contracts.

8. BIGHT'03 REGIONAL SURVEY UPDATE

Dr. Weisberg reported on progress of the Bight'03 Cooperative Regional Monitoring Survey. He indicated that the Coastal Ecology component was proceeding well and that the Microbiology component had successfully completed their dry weather sampling effort. He mentioned that the Water Quality component had finalized their workplan and was awaiting the next storm to begin implementation.

9. DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH PLAN

Dr. Weisberg presented the agency's approach to developing its Research Plan, in response to a previous Commission request. Dr. Weisberg indicated that research planning at SCCWRP was a six-month process that started with soliciting of project ideas from meetings with Commissioners and staff in December/January. In February, preliminary ideas are presented to CTAG for feedback. In March/April, SCCWRP staff refines project concepts, firms up project partnerships and funding possibilities. In April/May, the focus changes from the technical aspects to allocation of personnel time towards projects, developing project budgets and developing an overall agency budget. In June, the completed research plan is presented to the Commission for approval.

Dr. Weisberg outlined that he uses both project-specific and investigator-specific criteria for selecting among possible projects. The primary project-specific criterion is whether the project helps achieve a department's long-term objectives, is consistent with the Authority's mission and is relevant to the member agencies. Emphasis is also placed on co-funding and partnership opportunities, as well as the likelihood for project success relative to the proposed budget. People-specific criteria involve the track record of the individual scientist, such as publication and budgetary success. Dr. Weisberg noted that the process has become simpler over time, given the agency's increased emphasis on multi-year projects. He also noted that it's become more of a year-round process as the agency has become opportunistic to external funding and partnership opportunities.

Dr. Weisberg was asked how SCCWRP coordinates its research planning efforts with the special studies efforts that are now being incorporated into the member agencies monitoring

requirements. Dr. Weisberg responded that this was done haphazardly at the moment. The Commission asked that Dr. Weisberg discuss this with CTAG and report back at the next Commission meeting about how integration between these efforts could be enhanced. Dr. Weisberg was also asked to discuss with CTAG how SCCWRP's research direction might be affected by potential revisions to the California Ocean Plan.

At this time, Dr. Weisberg was handed a note indicating that Sam Schuchat, Executive Director of the Coastal Conservancy and the Commission's guest speaker that day, was delayed because of fog at the San Francisco airport. The Commission agreed to rearrange the agenda as necessary to accommodate Sam Schuchat's late arrival.

11. ATMOSPHERIC DEPOSITION STUDY

Deputy Director Ken Schiff provided an update on the Authority's atmospheric deposition project and the supplemental studies that agency was undertaking to quantify incremental inputs from the recent fires. He indicated that these studies included dry deposition studies during the fire period, wet deposition studies during the first rainstorm after the fires, and mass emission studies near the mouth of Ballona Creek to assess how much of the ash was being incorporated into the runoff. He indicated that the strength of these studies was the three previous years of data that SCCWRP had collected on atmospheric deposition that allow us to put the fire-related increment into perspective. Mr. Schiff then identified a few new areas of atmospheric deposition research, including the exploration of source signature methods for better defining the relationship between dry deposition to the watershed and resulting stormwater runoff.

15. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Nolta, a resident of Westminster, addressed the Commission regarding his concerns about the condition of beaches in Orange County and his perception of inadequate mitigation efforts to improve water quality.

10. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

In response to a previous Commission request, Dr. Weisberg presented the Authority's approach to communication and outreach. He pointed out that communication is an important part of the Authority's mission, with a large amount of resources allocated for that purpose and communication-related goals being part of performance appraisals for senior level scientists at SCCWRP. He outlined that there are three audiences the Authority potentially communicates with. One is scientists, who SCCWRP interacts with through its annual report, scientific journal publications, its web site and project partnership, such as Bight'03. He also indicated that SCCWRP was active in several scientific societies and served on numerous peer review or advisory panels, which have been a great means for interaction with leading scientists. The second audience was managers and that SCCWRP had a unique mechanism for achieving this communication through the Commission and CTAG. Dr. Weisberg indicated that SCCWRP staff supplemented this with numerous presentations to management groups, facilitation of discussion groups such as the Beach Water Quality Workgroup, and training workshops such as recently held workshops on microbial source tracking, sediment quality guidelines and wetlands assessment methods. The third group was the general public, which he indicated was not a focal point for the agency. He stated that SCCWRP had tried several venues for communicating with the public, such as science fairs, and found that the effectiveness relative to the effort was low because most of our work was too technical for a general audience. Several Commission members indicated that they agreed the priority is appropriately placed on communicating with the first two audiences.

13. FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The Commission requested that policy direction regarding the Authority's broad themes of research be discussed at the next meeting.

14. OTHER BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

None.

At 11:55 am the Commission took a 15 minute-break while waiting for Sam Schuchat to arrive.

12. OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEMS

Sam Schuchat, Executive Director of the California Coastal Conservancy, briefed the Commission on his agency's plans for implementing an Ocean Observing System intended to assist with water quality management. The Conservancy has \$21M in Proposition 40 and 50 funds for building a system that will be based largely on high frequency radar and wanted input to ensure that the system meets the needs of the SCCWRP member agencies. He indicated that the Conservancy was negotiating development of the system with the Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System (SCCOOS), a consortium of universities led by Scripps that had responded to an RFP issued by the Conservancy. Discussion ensued as to how the SCCWRP member agencies could best provide feedback in the development process. Several Commissioners suggested that Dr. Weisberg should be the focal point for that interaction, as he is also Co-chair of the U.S. Global Ocean Observing System Steering Committee, a complementary national initiative for developing ocean observing systems. Dr. Weisberg suggested that CTAG should play an active role, as there will probably be a desire to integrate ongoing member agency monitoring efforts with the HF radar system. The Commission asked that CTAG discuss what role they would like to play in assisting the Coastal Conservancy with their planning activities. Dr. Weisberg stated that he had received an invitation for SCCWRP to become a member of the SCCOOS consortium. He asked both the Commission and Sam Schuchat whether SCCWRP would be better positioned to help with the process as a member of SCCOOS or as an outsider providing feedback to the Conservancy. Sam and the Commission both responded that they were not mutually exclusive, provided that SCCWRP was not accepting Coastal Conservancy funds through SCCOOS, and endorsed SCCWRP participation in SCCOOS.

At 12:20 pm Commissioner Thibeault left. Commissioner Ghirelli left at 12:30 pm.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Dickerson adjourned the meeting at 1:10 pm until the next Commission meeting on March 5, 2004 at SCCWRP.

ATTEST:

Bryan Nece
Secretary