

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

**HELD AT THE OFFICES OF THE AUTHORITY
3535 Harbor Blvd., Costa Mesa, California 92626**

**December 12, 2008
9:30 a.m.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Brian Baird - *Ocean Protection Council*
Diego Cadena - *Los Angeles County Department of Public Works*
Mas Dojiri - *City of Los Angeles*
Tracy Egoscue - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region*
Robert Ghirelli - *Orange County Sanitation District*
Gerhardt Hubner - *Ventura County Watershed Protection District*
Steve Maguin - *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*
Darrin Polhemus - *State Water Resources Control Board*
John Robertus - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region*
Mary Anne Skorpanich - *County of Orange*
Alexis Strauss - *US Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX*
Cid Tesoro - *County of San Diego*
Jerry Thibeault - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region*

STAFF PRESENT

Stephen Weisberg - *Executive Director*
B. Richard Marsh - *Legal Counsel*
Ken Schiff - *Deputy Director*
Bryan Nece - *Administrative Officer*
Steve Bay - *Principal Investigator*
Keith Maruya - *Principal Investigator*
Peter Miller - *Principal Investigator*
Shelly Moore - *Information Systems Manager*
Eric Stein - *Principal Investigator*
Karen Setty - *Science Writer*
Dario Diehl - *Marine Programs Coordinator*

OTHERS PRESENT

David Barker - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region*
Wesley Beverlin - *Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith, LLP*
Phil Friess - *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*
Joe Gully - *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*
Burt Jones - *USC*
Gerry McGowen - *City of Los Angeles*
Maziar Mouassaghe - *DTSC*
George Robertson - *Orange County Sanitation District*
Tom Rosales - *SOCWA*
Scott Warren - *DTSC*

Irwin Haydock - *Public*

Commission Chair Dojiri called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 12, 2008**
- 2. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**
- 3. QUARTERLY STATEMENT OF INVESTMENTS AT SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**
- 4. MINUTES OF CTAG MEETINGS OF AUGUST 28, 2008**
- 5. 2008 FINANCIAL AUDIT**

Commissioner Ghirelli motioned for approval of consent items, which was seconded by Commissioner Maguin. The consent items were unanimously approved.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director began his report by describing four upcoming workshops that SCCWRP is planning to host or support. The first workshop is one that SCCWRP is hosting for NOAA on March 11-12 in which NOAA will seek to redesign their national Mussel Watch program as an early warning program for emerging contaminants. The SCCWRP Commission Chair and Vice-Chair have been asked to participate to ensure that the program redesign is of maximum value to water quality managers. The second workshop, to be held at SCCWRP April 27-28, will bring together scientists and managers from around the country to develop a decision process for managing contaminants of emerging concern (CECs). The meeting is co-sponsored by the Ocean Protection Council, the State Water Resources Control Board, US EPA, the San Francisco Estuary Institute, the Urban Water Research Center and the National Water Research Institute. The third workshop, sponsored by NOAA, will be held February 10-12 in Portland and will aim to develop consistency in monitoring approaches for harmful algal blooms along the Pacific coast. Fourth, SCCWRP is helping to plan the national BEACHES conference, which is sponsored by the US EPA and will be held in Huntington Beach April 20-22. Several Commissioners expressed particular interest in the workshop about managing CECs and made a number of suggestions for potential workshop invitees.

The Executive Director next described actions SCCWRP is taking to coordinate with similar organizations statewide. He indicated that the May CTAG meeting will be a joint meeting with the scientific advisory board for the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) to determine how the two organizations can enhance their interaction to promote statewide coverage and consistency. The Executive Director of SFEI has also been extended a standing invitation to attend all future CTAG meetings. SCCWRP will also be participating in a January 16 workshop organized by Catherine Kuhlman to help the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board assess how they can create a SCCWRP-like entity along the north coast of California.

Dr. Weisberg next detailed his activities as a member of the California Water Quality Monitoring Council, which is legislatively mandated (SB1070) to ensure that monitoring data is publicly accessible and coordinated effectively across agencies. The Council recently issued its report that summarizes the direction the State should take to address four main issues: consistency in methodology, data systems compatibility, accessibility of data, and thresholds for data interpretation. The group is now forming subcommittees to further develop web access to various types of information such as beach water quality, wetlands, and drinking water.

The Executive Director began the administrative portion of his Director's Report by introducing Dr. Peter Miller, the new head of SCCWRP's biology department. Dr. Miller was previously an associate professor at UC Santa Cruz and his work at SCCWRP will focus on development and transition of new molecular technologies to environmental monitoring programs. In describing financial updates, Dr. Weisberg announced that stop-work orders issued by the SWRCB earlier in the summer had been lifted. He next indicated that there was good progress in obtaining member agency signatures for the SCCWRP's Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), which expires June 2009. Dr. Weisberg reported that the SCCWRP Annual Report for 2008 was proceeding well and would be released at the SCCWRP Symposium on January 20. Dr. Weisberg joined the Personnel and Finance Committee in complimenting SCCWRP's Administrative Officer, Bryan Nece, for having an exception-free audit for the eighth year in a row. Dr. Weisberg noted that the recent changes to SCCWRP's salary resolution by the Commission to include an employer matching plan for staff retirement plans had led to 100% participation among the staff. Weisberg also announced that he recently became the longest-running Executive Director in SCCWRP's history, having now been at SCCWRP for twelve and a half years.

The Executive Director presented a plaque to SCCWRP's General Counsel, B. Richard Marsh, to recognize his nearly 40 years of service to the agency. Marsh drafted the original Joint Powers Agreement that formed SCCWRP in 1969 and this was his last Commission meeting before retirement. He introduced his colleague, Wesley Beverlin, who will serve as SCCWRP's General Counsel into the future. A motion was made by the Commissioner Maguin, seconded by Commissioner Ghirelli, and approved unanimously to express the Commission's heartfelt appreciation for his service.

Commissioner Baird asked about progress in developing rapid molecular methods for measuring beach bacterial indicators. Dr. Weisberg indicated that the methods were in late development, with research now focusing on understanding the few instances in which the new methods provide different results than traditional methods. Commissioner Strauss indicated that she would like to encourage implementation of these new methods and asked Dr. Weisberg whether it was feasible to adopt the new methods for application in southern California by summer 2009. Dr. Weisberg responded that there was a lot left to do, particularly with respect to developing training and certification protocols and that he had been targeting summer of 2010, but that it was potentially feasible to do so in 2009. Several other Commissioners indicated interest in implementing the new methods soon and asked that this topic be added to the agenda for the next Commission meeting.

7. CTAG REPORT

Gerry McGowen, Chair of the Commissioner's Technical Advisory Committee (CTAG), presented a summary of their November 19th meeting. The meeting focused on CTAG representatives presenting their present research activities and needs to facilitate development of next year's SCCWRP's research plan. He noted that there were a number of common interests across the member agencies, including contaminants of emerging concern, bacterial

source identification, sediment quality objectives, harmful algal blooms, climate change, and biocriteria. In addition, CTAG initiated a new standing agenda item for technical review of external contracts prior to their consideration at the upcoming Commission meeting. CTAG received presentations on autonomous underwater vehicles, the SCCWRP Symposium, and SCCWRP's research planning process, all of which were well received. McGowen thanked the Commission for their attention over the past two years, indicating that a new CTAG Chair would be elected at their next meeting to be held February 26.

8. CONTRACT APPROVAL

The Executive Director requested that the Commission approve resolutions regarding the following contracts that had been or would be offered to the Authority.

- 1) State Water Resources Control Board (\$4,200,000)
Source Identification Pilot Program
- 2) State Water Resources Control Board (\$500,000)
Sediment Quality Objectives
- 3) State Water Resources Control Board (\$4,000,000)
California Data Center

Upon the motion of Commissioner Maguin, seconded by Commissioner Robertus, the contracts were unanimously approved by Resolution, with Commissioner Strauss and Polhemus abstaining.

- 4) California Coastal Conservancy (\$440,000)
Bight'08 Water Quality
- 5) Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (\$258,200)
Historical Ecology of the Ballona Creek Watershed

Upon the motion of Commissioner Ghirelli, seconded by Commissioner Maguin, the contracts were unanimously approved by Resolution, with Commissioner Strauss abstaining. In response to a question from the Commission regarding how SCCWRP staff would be affected by the large number and amount of recent contracts, Weisberg explained that approximately half of the money would go to contractors and partnering organizations, and that staff size would not fluctuate based on periods of greater or fewer contracts. Commissioner Maguin noted the Commission's support for having CTAG review the contracts.

As an informational item, 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.

- 6) Six Flags Magic Mountain (through LARWQCB) (\$60,700)
Endocrine Disruption
- 7) City of Encinitas (through Mactec) (\$9,126)
Chemical Analysis

- 8) City of Oceanside (through Mactec) (\$16,115)
Fingerprinting Analysis
- 9) University of California, Santa Cruz (\$10,000)
MARINE Database
- 10) University of California, San Diego (\$60,000)
Bight'08 Biological Monitoring
- 11) Orange County Sanitation District (\$12,000)
Bight'08
- 12) Puget Soundkeeper Alliance (\$76,489)
Develop Benthic Community Indicators
- 13) University of California, Santa Cruz (\$45,022)
California Program for Regional Enhanced Monitoring of Phycotoxins
- 14) San Elijo Joint Powers Authority (\$4,500)
Atmospheric Deposition

There were no objections to any of these contracts.

10. USE OF AUTONOMOUS UNDERWATER VEHICLES FOR WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENTS

The Executive Director presented the results of an autonomous underwater vehicle (glider) survey conducted in collaboration with the South Orange County Wastewater Authority (SOCWA) and Dr. Burt Jones from USC. The glider was deployed offshore of the SOCWA outfall adjacent to Doheny Beach on July 29-31 and September 4-14. The glider propels itself by changing buoyancy and is guided along a pre-programmed course tracked by an onboard GPS. Data is collected continuously and telemetered to shore when the glider surfaces. This data is then processed to define water quality parameters identifying the discharge plume. Findings from the study indicated that the SOCWA plume never reached the surface and was almost never moving toward shore. In contrast with the glider, the data taken only at the normal CTD sampling points did not provide information on the plume magnitude and direction.

The Commission then discussed the advantages of gliders, which include more data available in real time, better spatial and temporal coverage, and the ability for deployment during inclement weather. Disadvantages include cost, extra data processing and equipment liabilities. Tom Rosales, Chief Engineer of SOCWA, was asked for his opinion about how the gliders performed at his location and indicated that he thought this was a good alternative technology to conducting CTD surveys. However, the glider was not currently capable of simultaneously collecting water samples for bacterial or nutrient analysis, as required by his NPDES permit, and therefore the cost tradeoff between gliders and CTDs were not realized because he still needed to deploy a ship for these traditional measurements. Weisberg then led a discussion among the Commissioners as to whether this is a technology that they want to pursue, with some interest expressed. Dr. Weisberg indicated that NOAA was willing to provide SCCWRP and its member agencies gliders on loan for future studies and Commissioners were asked to contact him if their agency was interested in using these loaner units in pilot applications,

9. BIGHT'08 UPDATE

Due to time constraints, the Executive Director gave an abbreviated update on this agenda item, indicating that the program is going well overall. He indicated that the Coastal Ecology team was able to facilitate sample collection in Mexico with the support of the Algalita Marine Research Foundation and the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California. Commissioner Baird offered to put SCCWRP in contact with legislators from Baja who might be interested in further supporting this effort.

11. RESEARCH PLANNING PROCESS

This agenda item was postponed until a future Commission meeting.

12. SCCWRP SYMPOSIUM

Due to time constraints, the Executive Director gave only a brief update on this agenda item, indicating that planning for the January 20, 2009 Symposium is going well. This will be the second annual event. Major differences this year include the addition of lab demonstrations and a poster session, with all of the presentations being recorded and posted online for access by member agencies. The presentations will also be webcast in real-time.

13. FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The Commission requested that the Executive Director focus the next meeting on SCCWRP's work to develop rapid methods for measuring beach bacteria and whether those methods are ready for implementation in summer of 2009.

14. OTHER BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Alternate Commissioner Cadena announced that Gail Farber had been designated to replace Dean Efstathiou as the Commissioner for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. Commissioner Hubner also announced that Alternate Commissioner Pratt had been appointed as Public Works director for the County of Ventura. Commissioners Maguin and Ecosgue were congratulated for finalizing the chloride TMDL on the Santa Clara River.

14. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Irwin Haydock commented on the glider presentation and encouraged maintaining historical data compatibility as the technology transitions.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 PM, in honor of Dick Marsh, until the next Commission meeting on March 13, 2009.

ATTEST:

Bryan Nece
Secretary