

## **State Watershed Program Advisory Committee Meeting**

November 2, 9:30am – 2:15pm

Meeting Summary

### **Meeting Location**

John Muir Room  
801 K Street, 20<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **Action Items/Key Decisions**

The Advisory Committee will meet again in approximately 1 month to clarify the purpose and role of the committee, discuss timeframe, structure, and purpose of regional outreach. Staff will poll committee members for their availability. Fridays were generally best for those in attendance.

### **Additional Information to be provided based on Committee's request**

- Review of what California state agencies are doing with respect to watershed management and planning.
- Clarification on relationship of Department of Water Resources –State Water Plan (Bulletin 160 and IRWMP) and this effort.
- Clarification on relationship of State Water Resources Control Board Strategic Planning Process and this effort and potential to integrate.
- A definition of watershed management.
- Information on what other states are doing with respect to watershed programs and policies.
- Glossary of watershed/agency acronyms.
- Link to AB 2117 report - *Addressing the Need to Protect California's Watersheds: Working with Local Partnerships*
- Provide report on the Awahnee Principles and Awahnee Water Principles– Local Govt. Commission
- Review of work done by the Office of Planning and Research with respect to water and watersheds
- Revision of Advisory Committee membership list with regional representatives noted.

### **Welcome**

Martha Davis and Robert Meacher, Co-Chairs of the Statewide Watershed Program Advisory Committee welcomed everyone to the kickoff meeting, thanked them for their participation. A round of self-introductions was made.

### **Initial Remarks**

Bridgett Luther, Director of the Department of Conservation (DOC) also welcomed everyone. She noted that Mike Chrisman, Secretary of the Resources Agency had planned to be there but was accepting an award from the National Wildlife Federation in Washington D.C. Ms. Luther expressed very strong support from the Secretary for a statewide watershed program – and is very excited to host the program at DOC. Ms. Luther noted that the Advisory Committee members were selected with a lot of care, and their assistance is needed in helping to frame a statewide watershed program.

### **Staff Presentation**

John Lowrie, Program Manager asked Committee members to review the previously distributed document on the chronology of the major state efforts from the previous 10 years which have influenced the state's policies on watershed management. He noted that there are still ongoing efforts in CALFED with respect to Watershed Program activities, especially grants support and valuation projects with previously encumbered funds– but a transition to a new program is underway. Also the Summary of Department of

Finance audit gives good independent summary of Watershed Program, relation to larger program and its accomplishments.

#### Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is composed of twenty-four people, from each of the ten hydrologic regions in the state. It includes 4 at-large members that are not region specific, but focus on critical areas – including Environmental Justice, Tribes and the Sierra Nevada.

Regional Forums - Staff envisions a series of regional forums to solicit input from stakeholders to help define the “program” including goals and objectives, what tools to pursue those goals and objectives, such as finances, technical assistance, performance management systems, and reporting. It is expected that financing will be part of discussion, but we do not want to focus on this at the outset. We hope we can define goals and objectives as the program moves forward.

#### Staff Resources

Staff from the CALFED Watershed program have been assigned to support this effort, including support to advisory committee members

#### Regional staff assignments:

Dan Wermiel: North Lahontan, Bay and San Joaquin  
Dennis Bowker: North Coast, South Lahontan, and Colorado River  
John Lowrie: Southern California and Sacramento  
Casey Walsh Cady: Central Coast and Tulare Basin

Program Financial Resources - There are approximately 2.5 years of remaining program funds, which includes some residual funding that may have some restrictions There is very little funding currently for implementation. Funds for implementation would have to be developed based on communicating and demonstrating how they add value.

#### Future meetings of the Watershed Advisory Committee

Expected to be open to the public.

#### Other Documents Circulated

- **CALFED Watershed Program Principles** were reviewed. Staff expressed they were very critical to the development of the CALFED Watershed Program. In the future -committee will review, update and develop a new statement of principles.
- **Draft Program plan** – is a draft workplan developed by staff as draft, and is intended as a starting point. It includes a schedule for activities, over the next 6,12 or 18 months.

#### Committee Comments/Questions/Concerns on proposed effort

- State needs to demonstrate that it values this approach.
- How do we make sure it is not another duplicate effort and integrated with other efforts?
- Need to ensure that when we talk about govt. – have to include tribal govt. as well.
- Believe that we do need a statewide program - but may not have long shelf life – want all agencies to adopt approach as a way of carrying out our business.
- Opportunity to identify regulatory challenges and recommend ways to work on them within watershed approach.
- Some people feel like train has gone – Central Coast is losing watershed groups – much confusion and frustration in my local area, smaller groups have had difficulty integrating well with IRWM.
- Support for initial staff plan, but recommend adding “Report and Recommendations” – and governance issue should be addressed
- Environmental Justice needs to be among the major highlights.
- Will need to think about what we can offer them to come to meeting.

- Concern that funding is drying up – creating a sense of insecurity. Need assessment of how competitive watershed efforts will be? How much future funds will be available and how we could influence future funding opportunities.
- What are bounds of conversation? What are the range of possibilities. Would like to have those discussions early on.
- Don't limit watershed management to just water, include other resources such as fish and clean drinking water.
- Need to look for where our niche is.
- Need mechanism for local watershed information to be broadly accessible and feed information up.
- IRWMP does not work well for smaller watersheds, because it is very expensive to administer and cost prohibitive for smaller orgs/ngo's.

### **Role and Expectations of Advisory Committee**

Staff and committee members reviewed the role of the Committee. The size of the Committee appeared adequate but can be adapted if necessary. Tim Frahm expressed concern that central coast representation may not be optimal as he is based in San Mateo, (Bay Region).

It was reinforced that committee members role is to act as a resource and provide connections in your region. Participation rules are not yet defined at this time, the committee may choose to develop their own. In the mean time if you see issues, talk to the Co-Chairs. Some members may choose to have an identified alternate.

### Comments/Questions/Concerns about Committee's Role

- How will we ensure that this adds value to communities and that is different that what has been offered before. What will my region receive and how will having a state program benefit my region.
- How do we resist answering the above question before we receive input from local communities?
- We need to be clear up front on our role and our activities.
- What are our process objectives – What kinds of stakeholders are we trying to bring in?
- Can this program be an opportunity to affect governance structure of resources management?
- Do we have sufficient resources to be effective?

### Comments/Concerns/Suggestions about Regional Forums

- Need clear statement of purpose about regional meetings, what are the objectives, how will they be transcribed and facilitated?
- Suggest including invitation from Secretary Chrisman for regional forum invitees.
- May want to have 4-5 statements and then pose more specific follow-up questions in a more guided process rather than open-ended questions (like what SWRCB recently did in its strategic planning meetings).
- Concern that it is premature to have regional meetings – want to make sure its right before we start.
- Need architecture to manage information. (*Note Web site is coming soon*).
- Expressed need for guiding principles so we can frame it, make sure it's meaningful for regional forums.
- Suggest consistent facilitation, consistent questions and need for facilitation, but need to allow for local needs to be considered.
- Concern about the time commitment to undertake this process.
- There may be need for different short-term and long-term role for committee members.
- There may need to have small subgroup to propose strategy for regional forums.
- Expressed there should be statewide program, there is value bottom-up approach, but there is also a statewide value to having the approach.
- Believe there should be a statewide program – that should not be a question posed in regional forums

- Threshold question – why is program being proposed – what is the problem statement – and how can we pose this at regional meeting.
- Meetings need to be designed/tailored to each region. Need to be value-added – Meetings need to be broad stakeholder invitation.

**Next meeting**

Those in attendance confirmed that Fridays are the best day for meetings – though staff noted that Friday might not be the best day for Sonoma County Water Agency members. It was agreed that the Advisory Committee would meet again in approximately 1 month to discuss the timeframe, structure, and purpose of the regional forums. Staff will poll committee members for their availability. Fridays were generally best for those in attendance.

*Note - Greg Kirkpatrick is going off Visalia City Council in 6 weeks - Farmland Conservation Strategies is his primary affiliation.*

Attachment 1 – Committee members in attendance