



2013 ANNUAL IEP WORKSHOP COLLABORATIVE SCIENCE PANEL

Lake Natoma Inn, Sierra Ballroom, April 25, 2013, 3:30 – 5:00 pm

43 YEARS OF IEP: COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION

- The IEP has been conducting “**cooperative ecological investigations** since 1970.”
- According to new Guiding Principles¹ for the future of the IEP, the IEP will provide “**collaborative science leadership**” and “serve as the interagency core of a collaborative Bay-Delta aquatic science network.”

QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL: “EVERYBODY TALKS ABOUT IT, WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?”

1. What is your definition of collaborative science and how is it different from “cooperative investigations?” What are the goals and benefits of each?
2. What is your vision for collaborative science in the IEP? To illustrate your vision, could you share an example of a successful collaborative science effort in the IEP or elsewhere? How can you help develop successful new collaborative science efforts in the IEP (see below for key ingredients for success)?
3. What happens if collaborating parties cannot agree on the design of studies or on the interpretation of scientific results to inform policy and management decisions? In your opinion, is the goal of collaborative science to find information on which all parties can agree, or is the goal to identify a shared understanding of information that will affect policy and management decisions?

ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIVE SCIENCE:

Successful collaboration efforts require significant resources, organization, planning, and buy-in from all collaborating parties. A literature survey² indicates that collaborative science projects work best when the following principles are incorporated and agreed upon by all parties prior to project initiation:

- A. A clearly defined, shared problem statement with common goals and objectives that address the problem statement. A clear definition of how collaborative science will be approached in the project. Most important, a shared understanding of how the information obtained in the collaborative project will affect policy decisions.
- B. Identification of all participants in the collaboration. In addition, roles need to be identified and structure needs to be implemented to make sure communication can be open between all participants. Many successful collaborative projects have a “champion” that can organize and lead the project. The project needs to identify a mechanism by which parties can resolve process differences (e.g., which elements to study, which elements to fund, etc).
- C. A dedicated source of funding that ensures the project will be completed at key intervals if a multiyear project (e.g., greater than five years) or throughout the lifespan of the project (e.g., less than five years). Not all parties need to contribute equal funding amounts, but all must parties must agree on each member’s contribution to the project.
- D. A clearly identified timeframe when information from the project can be used to inform policy decisions.
- E. A clear process for dealing with conflicting interpretation or information obtained from the project. Independent peer-review teams should be identified prior to implementation of the project and ideally informed as the project proceeds rather than reviewing the end product.

¹ Available at http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/docs/IEPDesignPrinciplesFinal_Jan2013.pdf

² Conducted by Lenny Grimaldo, Reclamation, March 2013