

Water Plan Regional Workshop Summary – Stockton, CA

OVERVIEW

The 2009 update of the California Water Plan, Bulletin 160 (Water Plan) is based on a collaborative approach that engages a wide range of stakeholders and the public in a variety of ways. The Water Plan team is receiving recommendations from a standing Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from 18 State agencies, and an Advisory Committee, with 39 representatives from organizations representing statewide interests. The involvement of regional and local interests is brought in through a series of public workshops conducted in each hydrologic region.

Each workshop consists of three major presentations to describe: the Water Plan, Regional Reports, and regional approach. Immediately following each presentation, workshop participants engage in brainstorming discussions in a small group format. A workshop for the San Joaquin hydrologic region and Delta area was held on August 13, 2007 in Stockton, CA. Copies of the workshop presentations, handouts, and materials are available on the Water Plan website at www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials.

A brief recap of the presentations is provided in the following paragraphs and the remainder of this document provides a summary of the small group discussions. Flip charts were used to record ideas generated during the discussions and transcripts of the flip charts are located at the end of this document.

Kamyar Guivetchi, Program Manager for Update 2009, presented an overview of the Water Plan Update process. This presentation described the approach and structure for the 2005 Update, as well as the process for the 2009 Update – including meeting schedule and opportunities for involvement, key activities and work products, and related content. The major sections of the Update include: data on water supply, use, and quality; water planning scenarios; water management strategies; Regional Reports; and reference materials and technical reports. Following this presentation, workshop participants were asked to identify additional items that should be considered for inclusion in the Water Plan.

In the second presentation, Karl Winkler, Chief of the Central District for the Department of Water Resources (DWR), and Paul Dabbs, Project Manager for Update 2009, reviewed the Regional Reports for the Delta and San Joaquin areas. Each regional report describes regional data and hydrologic conditions, regional challenges and accomplishments, and regional water planning efforts. The discussion related to this presentation asked for suggestions to improve the content of the Regional Report for the Delta and San Joaquin areas. Participants were also asked to identify and provide contact information for good sources in obtaining and verifying regional data sets.

The final presentation, by Judie Talbot, workshop facilitator, recapped the regional approach proposed for updating the Water Plan. The approach uses regional workshops, an annual regional forum, and an annual plenary session to bring in local perspectives, issues, and concerns into the Update process. The ensuing discussion asked for recommendations to: improve the proposed approach; encourage the continuation of regional dialogue on water management; and identify others who need to be part of the regional conversation on water.

The workshops also included brief presentations on related statewide water initiatives, including the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grants program, Flood Safe program, and Statewide Water Analysis Network (SWAN). The SWAN is an open forum of technical expertise that serves as a technical advisory group to Update 2009.

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DISCUSSION ON WATER PLAN CONTENT

After hearing the presentation on the approach, content, and structure of Update 2009, workshop participants were asked to brainstorm other topics that should be considered for inclusion in the Water Plan. Workshop attendees were specifically asked to think about regional issues and concerns that might benefit from additional attention. Three key themes that emerged during the group reports included:

- a. water quality: for surface water, groundwater, environmental water, and recharge supplies; resource management strategies must be assessed in terms on impacts on water quality; consequences for subsistence fishing; matching water quality to use
- b. San Joaquin River ecosystem restoration and environmental water for habitat, wetlands and refuges; meeting CVPIA restoration objectives
- c. water supply reliability and conjunctive use: integrated approach to recharge and use of cleanest water possible for recharge

Other topics that were identified by multiple group reports included:

- d. more conservation and recycling is needed, but water quality impacts must be avoided
- e. integration: complexities of the Delta need to be addressed as a package, not singularly
- f. optimize links between resource management strategies
- g. integration of flood management/levees, flood-flow storage, and groundwater recharge
- h. update Basin Plans

DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL REPORT CONTENT

The discussion groups suggested a wide range of additional topics that might be included in the Regional Reports:

- a. regional data:
 - address importance/role of levees and their maintenance; funding needs more flexibility; should recommend more setback levees and management of habitat
 - discuss environmental justice: disadvantaged/small communities; subsistence fishing; recreational uses
 - describe water infrastructure and operation of reservoirs
 - tie patterns of land use to water planning
 - write reports in plain language; make user-friendly
- b. water supply/demand/quality data:
 - impacts of dairies, septic tanks, and individual wells in rural areas
 - data on groundwater quality and contaminants
 - take into account existing water rights (legal entitlements vs. actual water received), as well as “extra-regional” considerations (i.e. Colorado River Basin)
 - better, more refined data is needed, especially for wetlands near the San Joaquin River (data on groundwater, water quality, flow)
 - continued refinement of operational models for the SWP and CVP

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- c. challenges:
 - include climate change scenarios for regional ecosystem impacts
 - effective salinity management and disposal of concentrate/brine
- d. resource management strategies:
 - propose San Joaquin River overflow areas for floodplain management
 - discuss local water supplies for south-of-Delta and related storage possibilities
 - look at optimizing reservoir operations (supply v. flood control)
 - include success stories in increasing water supply; need strategies for satisfying demand (storage, source protection, recharge)
 - watershed management: relationship of forest management to water quality/supply
- e. regional planning:
 - water availability/supply should be the primary consideration in land use planning
 - fully comprehensive regional plans must address water supply and quality for both new and existing communities
 - all regional stakeholders should be identified and involved in planning processes
 - multi-benefit planning is needed
 - describe resources and incentives available for IRWM planning
 - need regional approach for management and structure (e.g. basin-wide JPAs)
 - IRWMPs should include performance measures and regional monitoring

DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL APPROACH, OUTREACH, AND NETWORKING

At the workshop, participants commended DWR for developing a good foundation for the regional approach. Additional strategies and contacts were suggested for successful regional outreach and involvement:

- a. evaluate representation:
 - educate stakeholders on why they should be involved
 - local agencies: resource conservation and development councils (Yosemite/Sequoia and San Joaquin Valley); RCDs; county flood control agencies and special districts; city/county wastewater districts; planning commissioners/directors; policy makers
 - State agencies: CalFire (previously CDF) – vegetation and watershed management; DFG; Bay Area and State Water Boards (water quality and water rights)
 - Federal agencies: US Fish & Wildlife Service at State level (in Sacramento) and at refuge level; NRCS, USGS, BLM, US Bureau of Reclamation
 - research: Fresno State, UOP, UC Davis, Ca. Water Institute, Lawrence laboratories
 - involve reclamation districts in levee discussions; LAFCO; Building Industry Assn.
 - agriculture (Farm Bureau, Western Growers Association); small/rural communities (Rural Water Association); mutual water companies
 - NRDC, Delta Keeper, Mokelumne River Forum, Stanislaus County Summit; Sierra Club, League of Women Voters, Ducks Unlimited, raptor rescue center
 - consider how groundwater interests overlay hydrologic regions

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b. regional follow-up:

- provide follow-up for all Water Plan public meetings; create regional websites, post comments; don't lose concerns in translation
- communication needs to continue after workshops – consider membership fee to fund a “coordinator” to organize/manage a regional group or forum
- East Bay MUD has started “Mokelumne Forum” – use neutral facilitation for focus groups to discuss shared issues and potential solutions
- divide issues into topics, people can participate on topics they care about through focus groups, caucuses, or sub-committees
- fewer presentations, more time for regional discussions
- balance presentation of regions' concerns and issues at a detailed level with statewide issues – need the benefit of both discussions

CLOSING REMARKS

At the close of the workshop, Kamyar Guivetchi expressed thanks to all who attended and participated in the session. A special thank you was extended to the Natural Resources Institute and School of Engineering and Computer Science, University of the Pacific, for hosting the workshop.

A final reminder was given to participants on contacts for the Water Plan: Pierre Stephens is serving as the point of contact for regional coordination in the Central District. He can be contacted via email at jrstephe@water.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 651-0700. Ernie Taylor is the regional lead for the San Joaquin District of DWR. Ernie can be contacted via email at etaylor@water.ca.gov or by phone at (559) 230-3352. Paul Dabbs, project manager, provides general oversight for Update 2009 and can be contacted via email at pdabbs@water.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 653-5666.

**CWP Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts
San Joaquin Region and Delta Area - Stockton, August 13, 2007**

Table A

Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:

Top issues:

- * restoration of San Joaquin River: determine water supply and water quality needs; protect resources
- * include water quality issues: resource management strategies must be evaluated/discussed in terms of water quality impacts for each strategy; incorporate updated Water Boards basin plans in Water Plan;
- * evaluate climate change impacts to fish and water quality
- * environmental water needs for wetlands and refuges should be met, including future restoration needs; maintain agricultural water uses that help wetlands – like rice

Other issues:

- more conservation and recycling is needed, but water quality must be maintained; avoid water quality impacts
- Basin Plans must be updated
- Federal CVPIA restoration objectives should be met

Suggestions regarding regional reports:

- water availability and supply should be the primary considerations in land use planning
- role/importance of levees and their maintenance should be addressed; funding needs to have more flexibility to be helpful
- too many septic tanks and individual wells in rural areas need to be addressed
- fully comprehensive regional plans regional plans that address existing communities (all sizes) as well as new areas must address both water supply and water quality issues (do not forget about needs of small rural communities); funding is an issue
- should recommend more use of setback levees and management of habitat
- impacts of dairies on groundwater quality needs to be addressed
- all regional “stakeholders” need to be identified and asked to participate in planning process
- groundwater quality needs to be assessed and problems/contaminants identified; in some areas, groundwater quality data is needed

Regional outreach and networking:

- process needs to keep communication going after meetings/workshops end
- consider membership fee to fund a “coordinator” to organize/manage regional group or forum
- East Bay MUD has started “Mokelumne Forum” – focus group to discuss shared issues and potential solutions, use neutral facilitation

**CWP Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts
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Table A, cont'd.

- others that need to be involved:
 - resource conservation and development councils (San Joaquin Valley and Yosemite/Sequoia)
 - CalFire (previously CDF): vegetation and watershed management
 - for Delta, include Bay Area and State Water Boards (water quality and water rights)
 - county flood control agencies and special districts
 - involve US Fish & Wildlife Service at State level (in Sacramento) and at refuge level
 - city and county wastewater special districts
 - reclamation districts need to be involved in levee discussion
 - add raptor rescue center to list of groups

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Table B

Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:

Top issues:

- * protect cleanest water when blending water for recharge
- * match quality to use need: use non-potable water for non-potable uses
- * identify best recharge areas; prioritize land use to allow recharge
- * include guidelines for conjunctive water use, identify opportunities for conjunctive use (recharge, etc.)

Other issues:

- encourage highest quality water for reclaimed water
- expand IRWMP to include conjunctive use
- recognize and optimize linkages between resource management strategies

Suggestions regarding regional reports:

- include environmental justice, tied to recreational use
- propose San Joaquin overflow areas for floodplain management (combined flood and agricultural uses)
- include water quality (salt and nutrients); water quality is a bigger issue than mercury and will play a bigger role
- recognize wetland no-net-loss policy
- emphasize south-of-Delta supplies for south-of-Delta needs; then identify surface and groundwater storage possibilities
- evaluate conservation [supply] v. flood control use of reservoirs; temporary solutions for infrequent events (i.e. the ten-year flood)
- less rules
- include examples of success stories for increasing water supply
- include climate change scenarios for regional ecosystem impacts

Regional outreach and networking:

- educate stakeholders on why they should be involved – how does this affect them
- provide follow-up on all Water Plan public meetings
- create regional websites, post comments
- use Delta Vision process to send out announcement
- divide into topics, involve people on topics that they are interested in (environment, water supply, etc.); create committee using email conversation
- outreach to non-represented groups, key groups first
 - agriculture (Farm Bureau, Western Growers Association)
 - conveyance
 - recycled water
 - city and county planners (use list from Office of Planning and Research and CEQA net)
 - NRCS, NRDC, Delta Keeper, cities and counties, forestry, Building Industry Association

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Table C

Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:

Top issues:

- * include water quality:
 - surface water: Delta salinity/water quality issues
 - groundwater: salinity intrusion; contamination from other sources
- * integrated approach to flood control, flood-flow storage, and groundwater recharge systems
- * drought/super-drought water planning scenarios should be included for analysis

Other issues:

- recognition of “sub-regional” efforts (e.g. individual IWMPs within hydrologic region)
- continue to focus on inter-regional issues

Suggestions regarding regional reports:

- take into account existing water rights (legal entitlements vs. actual water received)
- “institutional” complexity of water rights issue
- “extra-regional” considerations (i.e. Colorado River Basin)

Regional outreach and networking:

- bridge gaps in communications between regions
- others who need to be involved:
 - reclamation districts (local) – LAFCO
 - Mokelumne River Forum (local)
 - Stanislaus County Summit (local)
 - US Bureau of Reclamation (federal)

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Table D

Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:

Top issues:

- * need to address Delta and “drivers” – flood risk, levee maintenance, ESA, and conflicting management (water conveyance); need to sustain Delta for agricultural and economic activities
- * water quality: has been deteriorating for the past 15 years; groundwater is high in salt/boron; environmental justice and subsistence fishing
- * water supplies (agricultural): reliability; draw down at San Luis Reservoir

Other issues:

- groundwater overdraft – need to recharge and be able to use in drought years
- State regulations (Water Boards) for drinking water standards
- climate change – address with science for water storage and management
- water management for operational flexibility
- San Joaquin spends less \$\$ on water use efficiency (WUE)
- IRWMP – ensure region gets funding to address needs
- Energy implications of water management
- land use and flood management and IRWMP – water supply
- water rights – a mess
- need action plan that survives administrations

Suggestions regarding regional reports:

- add information on
 - energy implications of water management – need strategy
 - climate change
 - water infrastructure
 - operation – reservoirs
 - land use: patterns of land use (e.g. less sprawl); tie land use and water planning together on a regional and local basis
- watershed management: look at forest management and relationship with water quality and water supply
- write reports in English – make user friendly
- what and how can State support resources/technical support for local government IRWM planning
- use incentives over regulation with criteria and requirements
- institutional barriers (e.g. rely on State and Federal agreements meeting obligations)

Regional outreach and networking:

- how to share between regions’ issues and concerns at a detailed level, not generic, and statewide level; will there be sufficient cross-fertilization?
- ensure that Federal agencies are engaged and committed to implementing Update 2005 and 2009; have Governor ask that the Feds participate in a meaningful and consistent way
- provide opportunity for each region to say what they would like another region to know; create caucus groups for these issues
- less DWR staff presentations to make time for regional voices

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Table D, cont'd.

- statewide organizations' representatives should attend regional meetings as much as possible
- add other stakeholders:
 - planning directors
 - planning commissioners (county/city)
 - development organizations
 - have statewide stakeholders share attending all regional meetings

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Table E

Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:

Top issues:

- * water reintroduction (e.g. San Joaquin River – short-term/long-term impacts on water quality)
- * new focus on water quality: salt (from river) increases with reduced water flows; boron
- * water supply reliability: water availability for projects is unknown

Other issues:

- groundwater depression: effects on ecosystem function and habitat restoration
- address bottleneck in Delta for moving water
- habitat: continuity for migration
- LAFCOs
- water quality/quantity
- encroachment on resources
- growth

Suggestions regarding regional reports:

- planning vs. implementation/solutions
- necessity is mother of invention
- the “f” word: always funding
- can't manage groundwater and surface water independently
- multi-benefit planning/integrated water management planning
- land use

Regional outreach and networking:

- will information [from workshops] be utilized?
- will comments/concerns be lost in translation?
- are all concerns being addressed?
- multi-agency collaboration facilitates buy-off
- on right track but need action
- keep the conversation going
- make consistent with other planning efforts
- cross-communication between participating agencies
- share information
- agree on message/info
- need to involve agriculture
- need to involve Federal agencies (Bureau of Reclamation, USGS, BLM, all ...)

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Table F

Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:

Top issues:

- * Delta water quality: mercury, salinity, and unknown/unaddressed chemicals
- * San Joaquin River ecosystem restoration
- * levee protection: wildlife protection, water supply, farming

Other issues:

- State Water Project supply reliability
- habitat (smelt, salmon, sturgeon)
- San Joaquin River:
 - salmon restoration
 - recreation and public access
 - wetlands enhancement/creation
 - water quality and supply (selenium, salinity)
- San Joaquin River/Delta system complexity: many issues – need to deal with them all together, not singularly
- dissolved oxygen, temperature
- San Luis Drain (complete?) – brine line

Suggestions regarding regional reports:

- data: more is needed; better, more refined – especially for wetlands near San Joaquin River (groundwater, water quality, flow)
- continued refinement of operational models: SWP and CVP

Regional outreach and networking:

- how do groundwater basins overlap with surface water region
- east side/west side: different issues
- subcommittees for larger regions to discuss specific issues; focus groups
- involve other stakeholders
 - universities (Fresno State, UOP, UC Davis, Ca. Water Institute)
 - resource conservation districts (Kings River)
 - NGOs (Sierra Club, Ducks Unlimited, League of Women Voters)
 - educational – outreach groups (Lawrence Berkeley National Labs, Lawrence Livermore National Lab, Lawrence Hall of Science)
 - policy makers

CWP Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts
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Table G

Regional considerations to include in Update 2009:

Top issues:

- * environmental water quality: habitat, in-stream water quality, salinity
- * emphasis on effective reuse strategies: maintain water quality, improve technologies, streamline, increase regional supply through reuse
- * focus on strategies to improve infrastructure for small communities

Other issues:

- more effective/reliable conveyance: levees; other conveyance/canals
- levee integrity: floodplain management; levee maintenance; habitat along levees
- maintain water basin plans and water quality objectives

Suggestions regarding regional reports:

- water supply:
 - protect and renew infrastructure
 - climate issues
 - demand for user groups
 - strategies for satisfying demand (storage, source protection, reuse)
 - cross-linked with water quality
- water quality:
 - non-point source: effectively address issue
 - current basin plans
 - development of effective salinity management and disposal of concentrate
 - climate issues
 - cross-linked with water supply
- management structures and funding:
 - regionalized (such as basin-wide JPAs)
 - more reliable and effective funding strategies
 - increased and continuing emphasis on IRWMP (regional is key)

Regional outreach and networking:

- good work! right approach
- not enough data – regional monitoring programs (IRWMPs should include performance measures and regional monitoring – including salinity and nutrients)
- inter-regional conversations needed between Sacramento and San Joaquin
- continued coordination as a condition of IRWMP funding
- involve other stakeholders:
 - small/rural communities represented (Rural Water Association)
 - mutual water companies
 - region-specific representation from State and Federal agencies (Water Boards, DFG, US Bureau of Reclamation, US Fish and Wildlife Service)
- more M&Ms/cookies