

CWP North Coast Regional Workshop Summary
Santa Rosa, CA – April 28, 2008

OVERVIEW

As in the prior update, the 2009 Update of the California Water Plan includes a volume consisting of Regional Reports, which describe the conditions for each hydrologic region in the State – as well as two areas of special interest (the Delta and Mountain Counties areas). Each regional report uses a standardized format in describing the current conditions for each region or area. The content for each report is being developed with the involvement of regional and local interests through a series of public workshops conducted in each region or area.

Each workshop consists of three major presentations to describe: an update on the state of Update 2009 activities; revision of Regional Report outlines, based on previous workshop results; and overview of the initial draft outline. For each workshop, most of the time is dedicated to small group review and comment of the initial draft outline of the Regional Report for that region or area. A workshop for the North Coast hydrologic region was held on April 28, 2008 in Santa Rosa, 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 and worksheets were used to record ideas generated during the discussions and transcripts of the recorded results are located on the following pages.

Paul Dabbs, Project Manager for Update 2009, made the first presentation regarding the status of major 2009 Update activities. A key element is the integration of the FloodSafe and IRWM (Integrated Regional Water Management) programs with the Water plan. This new content will be reflected in each Regional Report, as well as the scenarios and Resource Management Strategies (RMS). Other additions to the Water Plan include: quantification of scenarios and potential response packages; assessment of climate change impacts and recommended adaptation actions; and incorporation of other State plans with strong connections to the Water Plan.

Outreach efforts to regional, Tribal, and local interests are continuing to expand. A total of six drafts will be available for each Regional Reports and RMS, with opportunities to comment on the five drafts preceding the final report. Workshop sessions for RMS will occur during July and August 2008, with a conference line to facilitate participation. In addition to the feedback solicited for Regional Reports and RMS, review and comment is requested by June 30, 2008 for the Draft Assumptions and Estimate report released at the end of 2007.

In the second presentation, Tito Cervantes with the Northern District for the Department of Water Resources (DWR), reviewed the key characteristics of the North Coast hydrologic region. A recap of the comments heard during the previous workshop was also provided, along with a revised outline for the Regional Report format. In the final presentation, Tito described each section of the Regional Report for the North Coast. Workshop attendees reviewed, discussed, and provided suggestions for each section, as recorded on the following pages.

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Questions

- will Water Plan identify data gaps (e.g. groundwater information, disadvantaged communities)?

Suggestions for Topics in Regional Report Outline

- emergency planning: how will water supplies and sanitation needs be met for disadvantaged communities and displaced populations?
- after 9/11, emergency planners considered what would happen if there was a disaster in San Francisco – there would be a large influx of people
- Tribes have considered their own evacuation plans – are not covered in county evacuation plans or emergency planning

Suggestions for North Coast Regional Report

Setting

Watersheds

- info source: Environmental Defense GIS Arc View “Ocean Map” ~2005

Ecosystems

- protection of rookeries: permits for Fourth of July fireworks disrupt rookeries
- local general plans have ecosystem maps (Sonoma)
- DFG – California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System database shows wildlife and habitats by county: www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cwhr
- native plant restoration, e.g. Laguna de Santa Rosa is choked by water weed
- on Klamath River, Tribes working on restoration and hatchery
- coastal ecosystem issues – sandbars block river mouths during droughts, blocking fish for spawning access
- update status of Klamath dam removal, potential to help salmon
- DFG: Trinity and Mad rivers, Fort Bragg group (private), need funding
- Tribes: sacred sites committee also working to restore native plants; basketry tradition plant materials are vulnerable to pollution, need to protect sites and keep locations private
- Tribal non-point source projects funded by EPA (including water conservation, fisheries, restoration) – the Yurok and Klamath have many sediment reduction projects with tree planting along streams
- fisheries: Trout Unlimited focused on steelhead and coho; also, rockfish (young spend time in estuaries)
- Big River estuary in Mendocino, land trust active with State Parks
- estuaries important: Salmon Creek, Russian, Mattole, ...

Climate (no comments)

Demographics

- info source: North Coast IRWMP section on taxes and planning provides information on disadvantaged communities
- Tribal communities are not on county rolls and are outside city limits, they are not heard and not represented in disadvantaged communities data
- Native American Heritage Commission has a list of Tribes in Sonoma
- port demographics see:
www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/docs/public_comments/update2009/2008/050508cozens-tribal.pdf

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Land Use Patterns

- Sonoma County has a consultation process regarding projects and is currently working with three Tribes on land use decisions that might affect Tribes
- look at growth at a statewide level, as well as local plans and local supply; local planning departments and small community service districts can provide information on regional infrastructure
- need to look at upstream/downstream impacts of land use
- ABAG and MTC can provide information on growth
- Trinity, Mendocino, and Sonoma counties have water resources elements in their General Plans
- local general plans have information on growth projections; maps of open space (Sonoma)
- Dina Marinlander, UC Berkeley, Hopland – GIS water-balance model for the Russian River (land and water use) – use for draft instream flow study

Regional Water Conditions

Water in the Environment

- Tribal concerns – cultural practices important
- would like baseline natural river flows for fishery and Tribal use; minimum flows across wet and dry years
- SWRCB draft in-stream flows policy – geographic region: Bay area to Mattole; sets minimum by-pass flows, seasons; pertains to pending and future water rights applications

Water Supplies

- Tribes are working with Tribal health agencies to try and assure supply
- need better understanding of groundwater basin, demands, and sustainable yield
- Sonoma County and Sonoma County Water Agency are working with USGS to identify groundwater sources in Alexander Valley and the Bay area
- there are Tribal water rights on Clear Lake
- provide historical use for context
- see note on Water Boards in-stream flow policy (water in the environment)

Water Uses

- look at local general plans for information on water use and efficiency
- Tribal water rights tied to Federal laws
- some dairy farms

Water Quality

- pesticides and irrigation for new vineyards are reaching the Russian River through runoff
- Clear Lake is a cesspool for contaminants
- clearcutting above the North Fork of the Gualala case water temperature to increase (even more than losing riparian cover); change to sustainable harvesting
- abandoned diesel generators in southern Humboldt County, from illegal activities, affect water quality and creates fuel/fire problem
- pharmaceuticals of concern
- mercury problems in Lake County, Trinity, Cinnibar mining near Clear Lake
- Klamath River has blue-green algae problems – Tribes have data; implementing TMDLs to try and reduce; EPA Region 10 is working on

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- 2003 Klamath Basin Tribal Water Quality Workgroup formed to support Klamath fisheries (with Kier Associates)
- sewer overflow issue

Project Operations

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Water Governance

- there are 500 water providers in Sonoma County, Dept. of Public Health
- would like to see a groundwater oversight provision; AB 3030 water providers oversee groundwater management – it is necessary to partner with the county on groundwater management...and need to find a lead; it's a question of authority – use of general police powers poses greater challenges, better to use water management authorities
- Tribes are regulated by EPA
- land use v. water supply – some areas are restricting growth; City of Santa Rosa Water Planning has some integration regarding SB 221/610 – 6 water supply assessments done for large developments
- Sonoma County LAFCO participates in land use decisions

Flood Management

Historic Floods

- 1964 - Klamath

Flood Hazards

- source: contact Sonoma County Water Agency Flood Protection regions to update needs www.scwa.ca.gov/about_your_water/flood_protection.php#zones
- Klamath levees – Resighini Rancheria is on the floodplain and has no protection

Institutions

- counties, cities, and water agencies have OES offices
- 2003-4 (Federal) Disaster Mitigation Act: requires disaster mitigation planning; Tribes are also required to have Hazard Mitigation measures – Department of Defense is required to provide disaster assistance to Tribes
- Mendocino County Public Health is looking at needs for displaced populations
- US Army Corps of Engineers for Russian River flooding problems

Existing Flood Damage Reduction Measures

- flood problems are localized

Relationship with Other Regions

- water conservation program in Oregon to benefit Tule Lake
- hydro-electric/FERC – utilities are reluctant to share grid with the Tribes; Tribes have talked about small hydro, but no progress
- Klamath River effects on fisheries (water temperature, habitat)
- inter-regional impacts from commercial fishing on Tribal resources
- inter-regional impacts from population growth, increased water exports to support local supplies in other regions (in response to other regions' droughts and growth)

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Regional Water and Flood Planning and Management

Integrated Regional Water Management

- all cities have urban water management plans – are a good source of info

Accomplishments

- Sonoma County Water Agency is working towards sustainability and carbon-free water by 2015
- Sonoma County Water Agency is partnering with RCDs, who have good relations with private land owners, to leverage access to private lands by public/government agencies
- North Coast IRWM is sharing financial and technical assistance for grant writing and needs assessments
- building capacity and greater regional voice at statewide levels
- counties at the planning level are coordinating GIS efforts
- the Russian River Watershed Association involves cities, counties, special districts, and a Tribe on watershed restoration and enhancement
- Sonoma County is working with community service districts and unincorporated areas on training, education, and grants
- in Hopland, Tribes and ranchers are working with the California Conservation Corp for restoration work, including instream flows and temperature
- Tribes are conducting ecosystem surveys of Tribal and traditional lands
- Lake County Coordinating Resource Management Committee is collaboratively working with Federal, Tribal, State, County, and local entities to manage and restore natural resources
- the NCIRWMP policy review panel, NC IRWM Plan itself
- Sonoma County Water Agency is working with water contractors in Marin who are funding fisheries restoration on the Russian River, as well as a regional conservation program
- inter-Tribal efforts on Clear Lake; inter-tribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council is working with CDF on land conservation
- Mendocino Land Trust's Big River Strategic Plan
- NOAA Open Rivers Initiative
- Coho Broodstock Program in the Russian Abasin (UC Davis/Moyle)
- Big River Fish Barrier Removal Program (in progress)
- AmeriCorp project: Hoopa and Yurok, Trinity River restoration (gravel, riparian habitat)
- DFG – Russian River fisheries habitat conservation grants – GIS layer
- Karok and Siskiyou County Upper Klamath Rehab project; fishery impact grants
- 95% of Santa Rosa wastewater is recycled, most going to geyser hydro
- Russian River First Flush Sampling Program – volunteer effort for water quality sampling after first rain; data collection with Soyotome RCD and RWQCB

Challenges

- buy-back options for alternative sources of energy does not provide incentives – incentives or credits are only issued for the first year, after that providers do not receive any incentives or credits for the energy supplied to utilities
- water laws (e.g. use it or lose it) promote waste; Yolo and Lake Counties must use or lose allocation
- recycled/reclaimed water has huge capital costs
- need conservation incentives – who are the beneficiaries? better enforcement of existing conservation measures required additional personnel

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- Santa Rosa supply is biggest issue – mixed portfolio
- sewer overflow issue, limited discharge to Laguna de Santa Rosa

Drought and Flood Planning

- drought and conservation efforts are tied to project operations – has a big impact on local economy; also tied to raising rates
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Looking to the Future

Future Scenarios

- scenario with limited inter-basin transfers (tax?); show map of assured future inter-basin transfers

Climate Change

- alternative fuels/energy: biomass, methane digesters and landfill gas
- Sonoma County Water Agency is partnering with the City of Santa Rosa on a feasibility study for biodiesel options with used fats/oils/grease
- wave energy generation: concerns about effects on fish due to entanglement in cables, perhaps sound?
- Tribal: Fort Bidwell group working on geothermal

Response Strategies

- alternative uses for recycled water, e.g. geoheat exchange (Lake County)
- reduce inter-basin transfers; move toward regional self-sufficiency
- reduce evaporative losses from California Aqueduct
- wave energy generation supporting desal (being used in Australia)

Implementation Next Steps

- need water education – this is a finite system; water quality-wastewater links
- need more streamflow data, especially in headwaters – clarify who does what, where archived, need portal/inventory/linked databases
- track water quality contaminants back upstream – more monitoring and analysis (e.g. water quality at mouth of river – Klamath, Eel – is result of upstream actions)
- Tribal perspective on water use and tie to sustainability, the way we live takes care of the planet – the salmon decline “is like watching the end of the earth”

Water Portfolios from 1998 - 2005

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Selected References

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