

## **CWP South Lahontan Regional Workshop Summary Bishop, CA – April 24, 2009**

### **OVERVIEW**

The 2009 Regional Workshops for the California Water Plan featured the Public Review Draft of the Highlights document, as well as an overview of current conditions for the respective hydrologic region or area of special interest. Each workshop also included a presentation on the scenario planning approach used to consider future uncertainty for water management. In the agenda, several hours were dedicated to small group review and comment of the draft Highlights and Regional Report for that region or area. Based on suggestions made during the 2007 and 2008 workshops, time was also provided for updates on related planning processes.

A workshop for the South Lahontan hydrologic region was held on April 24, 2009 in Bishop, CA. Copies of the workshop presentations, handouts, and materials are available on the Water Plan website at [www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials](http://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 incorporated into the summary.

Paul Dabbs, Project Manager for Update 2009, made the first presentation and outlined the planning process and status of major 2009 Update activities, culminating in the release of the Public Review Draft. Paul described the sections of the Highlights booklet, which serves as an Executive Summary for Update 2009. The Highlights begins with a description of existing water conditions in California that require urgent attention and response. The following pages outline the range and variation in water resources throughout the State.

The Highlights also discusses Climate Change and the existing framework for Integrated Water Management, which links to the Resource Management Strategies outlined in Volume Two and Regional Management Strategies provided in Volume 3. Other features of the Highlights include a discussion on scenarios and a fold-out section describing the Strategic Plan for Update 2009, including key objectives. The concluding recommendations represent “policies, strategies, and approaches that will help reduce and remove impediments, and leverage resources and opportunities” to implement Water Plans goals, objectives, and related actions.

In the second presentation, Mark Stuart, DWR, Southern District Chief, reviewed the key characteristics of the South Lahontan hydrologic region. The overview included items contained in the Regional Report, with special focus on local and regional issues, and management and planning activities. Paul Dabbs presented a third focus on the scenario approach being developed for future water planning. Work is currently underway to quantify potential water demands, with a subsequent phase to evaluate water resource management strategies.

Workshop attendees reviewed, discussed, and provided suggestions for each section, as recorded on the following pages. The agenda ended with several updates on related statewide water and planning initiatives: Harold Singer, Executive Director, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, described recent Water Boards’ activities and programs; and Julie Bear, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Mount Whitney Area Senior Representative, provided an update on the Conservancy efforts and grants status.

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**Discussion A – Public Review Draft: Highlights and Table of Contents**

- Strengthen regional self-sufficiency concepts. Is that realistic? Emphasize less dependence on imported water.
- A lot of policies focus on growth. The notion of growth is a key driver in State planning, especially in Southern California. Proposition funding is often allocated according to population base. This growth focus makes local entities (where little growth is occurring) ineligible for funding. This is especially true for Alpine, Inyo, and Mono counties. Statewide approaches should not be detrimental to local entities. Growth patterns have implications for social and economic conditions.

The implications of growth need to be discussed – this varies by region. In some areas, even a little growth is unacceptable. Inyo has 1.8% private lands. Large scale policies regarding growth may not be appropriate when those concepts trickle down to the local level. In small areas, growth puts additional obligations on limited funding. There are impacts on small entities. Acknowledge the resource capabilities and constraints of regions. Investment in low-population source watershed is as important to meeting the goals and objectives as investment in high-population destination (use) areas.

- Programs, implementation, and funding need to be directed to areas that are sources of water.
- Recognize the importance of healthy watersheds at the source areas; discuss the benefits of watersheds and forests in terms of water supply and water quality.
- Add a guiding principle for maintaining resource values in areas of origin. There are resource-wide economic values, as well as recreation economic values. This principle applies to many of the objectives.
- Guiding Principle #8 (water rights and public trust) is important for this area – good to see here.
- Objective 7 (the Delta), should be expanded to include the watersheds that sustain the Delta.
- 3 hydrologic regions can apply for CalFED funding, the other 7 regions are left out. Bond funding should be available on a statewide basis to protect source watersheds. Look at equitable distribution of funds. Areas of origin and counties of origin need funding sources. (LADWP exemptions.)
- Page 4-5, Suggest adding climate change as its own subheading to highlight impacts and adaptation, since climate change is a major focus throughout the plan.
- Page 5, “declining” ecosystems has vague meaning; “deteriorating” is more descriptive and is also used on page 7.
- Where and how does ACWA and other agencies tie into the process?
- Page 14 and Volume 2: Why is the Economic Incentives RMS included in the Resource Stewardship category? It seems to be its own category.
- Volume 2: Strategies need to include storage and reuse of precipitation; encourage further exploration of gray water.
- Urban planning needs to be integrated into development of solutions.
- Promote coordination between local planning and water agencies.
- Provide a link to data regarding flood control operations and how drought releases are used downstream.
- Look at changes in environmental water, how environmental water dedications have changed in State and the subsequent consequences (especially unintended consequences).
- Look at changes in use, such as permanent agriculture, and the subsequent consequences.

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**Discussion B – Regional Report**

- China Lake Naval Base
- The northern part of this regions relies on surface water
- Water governance and adjudicated basins section needs to include discussion on important court cases: the Mono Lake/Los Angeles/Inyo water agreement; dust abatement
- The use of environmental water as a supply is confusing – isn't it a use?
- Water year classifications as “dry” and “average” are different when looking at statewide v. regional conditions.
- Do the portfolios show total surface water? What is the definition for developed water? Need definitions for net, applied, and depletion.
- Link/point to where data, methodologies, and assumptions are described.
- The flood risk text need to discuss the connection to fire – how fire is managed; consequences for water resources.
- Point to non-structural responses of flood management (forest planning and management)
- Use a separate arrow to show “pass through” water – include in description
- LA Aqueduct is a central piece of every water decision – the amount of water associated with the LA Aqueduct is buried. Unable to see how it works in this region.
- Need a sub-regional look – the demographics of the South overshadow the North. Need a discussion of the dominance of the LA Aqueduct in the northern part of this region (numbers, court cases). The abundant surface waters go into the aqueduct.
- There are Tribal water rights issues have never been resolved. This is a piece of the water rights and governance section.
- Here, or Volume 1, need discussion on the relation between groundwater pumping and surface water flows. Discuss governance regarding groundwater.
- Solar thermal plant (at Little Lake) – dry v. wet cooling. Dry cooling costs 10% more. (Can the California Energy Council provide a description of water use, additions costs?) What is the trade-off between alternative energy and water conservation?
- Discuss regional implications of climate change.

**Discussion C – Scenarios**

- There are statewide expectations regarding population levels and funding allocations.
- There is funding for “Blueprint” planning – local (small) governments are not required to meet elements associated with Blueprint planning. Using this title has legislative implications; that all jurisdictions should use this approach.
- What's the reference for the percentage of conservation? Do not use a super-wet year as the baseline.
- The bar charts should show the low growth scenario on the left, current uses continued in the middle, and expansive growth on the right. (low, medium, high water demands).
- Need have a link to description of the strengths and limitations of the scenarios and models.
- The statewide conclusions are not especially helpful. The models are better with more focused information at the local level. The finer details of the application are more helpful.

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**Other Comments**

- The Mono Lake Committee would be happy to provide images of Mono Lake, the Mono Basin, tributary streams, and ecological restoration. Mono Lake is a great example of sustainable water resource management. Contact: Arya Degenhardt, Communications Director, Mono Lake Committee: 760-647-6595. Arya@monolake.org.

**Attendance**

Holly Alpert, Inyo-Mono IRWMP  
Linda Arcularius, Inyo County  
Alan Babcock, Big Pine Paiute Tribe  
Julie Bear, Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
Don Cortichiato, IWW Water District – Ridgecrest  
Mark Drew, CalTrout/Inyo-Mono IRWMP  
Julie Griffith-Platter, Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
Bob Harrington, Inyo County  
Erin Lutrick, Inyo National Forest  
Pam Mitchell, Public  
Geoff McQuillein, Mono Lake Committee  
Harold Singer, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

Paul Dabbs, DWR, Water Plan Project Manager  
Mark Stuart, DWR, Chief, Southern District  
Barbara Cross, DWR, Tribal Liaison  
Vern Knoop, DWR, Southern District  
Dave Scruggs, DWR, Southern District  
Abi Aderonu, DWR, Southern District  
Brian Moniz, DWR, Southern District  
Judie Talbot, Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS