

**James Fitzgerald Reserve Pilot CCA Project Pilot
Special Steering Committee Meeting Conference Call
June 19, 2007 Summary**

Participants:

Phone: Kellyx Nelson-Resource Conservation District (RCD); Rich Allen-Moss Beach Ranch and RCD; Lisa Sniderman, Jack Gregg-Coastal Commission (CCC); Sam Herzberg-San Mateo County (SMC) Parks; Carolann Towe-Surfrider; Carmen Fewless-Regional Water Quality Control Board; Ann Stillman-San Mateo County Public Works

Summary of Key Items from June 19 Steering Committee (SC) Call

This call focused on a few key issues raised re: the work of the technical team and relationship of the team to the SC, confusion over language and deliverables in contracts and grants, confusion over project management and grant management, and lack of clarity on the process moving forward. In this call, we talked about these issues and attempted to brainstorm ways to address them.

To summarize, ABAG recently provided the SC a Technical Memorandum (TM) from ABAG to SFEI summarizing information gathered in support of a watershed assessment and partly intended to help the Coastal Commission meet some of their grant reporting deadlines. The SC provided comments on the big picture items related to the WA at the last SC meeting on May 24 and offered to review and provide specific comments in track changes on the TM over a few subsequent meetings. The SC met June 08 and began discussing and incorporating comments and continued the commenting through email. The SC has found that even with all of the work everyone has already spent (Thanks especially to Kellyx for compiling comments!), there is a lot of work (unbudgeted) remaining to be done to make the TM accurate and factual, to edit, and make it a document that the SC could support. In general, the SC expressed that this TM is primarily a literature review and characterization with much more analysis remaining to be done before it could be considered a comprehensive watershed assessment.

Also at the May 24 SC meeting, SFEI/ABAG offered to review the Steering Committee's proposed changes, revise the document as appropriate and send out another draft with the resources available. Kat and Kathleen reminded the Steering Committee that SFEI/ABAG did not have resources budgeted to do much more on this deliverable. In fact, although key information that may be included in the TM may be part of SFEI contract tasks and deliverables (it is unclear which deliverables may be satisfied), a watershed assessment does not appear to be a specific deliverable. That still needs clarification/confirmation from SFEI, on which Lisa is following up. This is just one component of the tech work that SFEI is doing under their Phase I contract.

One of the key disconnects for the Steering Committee is that the SC envisions the following products over the course of the pilot project: (1) a well done, thorough assessment that informs an action plan, (2) an action plan, and (3) project implementation. Now they are told they need to seek additional funding (or some other options) to do what they thought the process would do. For example, the tech team is providing characterization and other technical information to the Steering Committee to inform a watershed assessment but the writing of a thorough assessment is not included

in either their CWA 319(h) contract (SFEI's Phase I) or their Proposition 50 grant tasks for SFEI's Phase II. The SC does not believe that SFEI's contract and grant are aligned with the key CCA goals and needed products. Regarding the scope of a "thorough assessment", Lisa asked whether the SC envisioned additional data compilation; the SC responded that a watershed assessment that would satisfy their needs can be done without collecting new data. [Note: In any case, the SC in consultation with the funding agency would need to determine the scope of a watershed assessment that would be adequate to support the decisions in the CCA Action Plan.]

Jack Gregg (Coastal Commission) reiterated what Al Wanger described at the SC's special March meeting-that after some of the CCA pilots in the Northern and Southern part of the state applied and were grant funded (because they were Areas of Special Biological Significance), Coastal Commission searched for a way to support the other three pilots (Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Watsonville Slough, and Sonoma Creek in SF Bay). There was no systematic program support so when EPA and the State Water Board offered some Clean Water Act Section 319(h) funding (\$200k for three CCAs), the Nonpoint Source Program had to come up with a project relatively quickly and act on the opportunity. Given the small amount of money available, the steering committee for the California NPS Program (staffed by CCC, SWRCB and USEPA), decided to use the funding to support the three pilot projects and help develop methods that could be transferred to other Critical Coastal Areas. They decided to have a consultant provide some technical products (e.g., base maps, GIS data layers, literature surveys, estimates of load reductions by available management measures and impervious surface analyses), so that the local stakeholders could focus on combining the results of these technical products with their local experience to determine the priorities for each CCA.

The funding was delivered through a CWQ 319(h) contract that is managed by the State Water Resources Control Board (Steve Fagundes). Lisa Sniderman has been the lead staff for the JFM CCA Pilot and the liaison between the Coastal Commission and SFEI /ABAG over the course of SFEI's Phase I, but the Grant Manager and the decisions about completeness of grant tasks are at the SWRCB. According to the SC, this may be a gap since Lisa can only provide input and review of tech team deliverables, but has no authority to request that changes be made, and the Grant Manager has not been part of the SC to assure quality and timeliness of contract deliverables.

Further, the SC raises a valid concern of whether this process and project are worth doing, e.g., is it worth continuing to participate and invest time and energy into products that they can not support?

In addition, the SC is not clear on all of the various deliverables that are included in the contract (Phase I) and grant (Phase II), despite updates from the tech team at SC meetings. The SC would benefit from a better understanding of what the technical products are that will be provided as part of this project and what they are expected to comment on. Lisa has emailed the contract and grant as well as an outline of what SFEI expects to be included in their Final Phase I Report and a list of deliverables. Lisa proposed that if these deliverables and language still don't make sense, the SC can ask Kat/Kathleen to come and clarify them at a future meeting.

Here are some of the alternatives and next steps that the SC proposed:

Alternatives:

- (1) Do nothing (meaning don't keep working on filling all the gaps in on the TM)
- (2) Do implementation. If we do not have the funds or resources to do an assessment well, consider skipping or having abbreviated but accurate assessment in favor of on-the-ground implementation now to reduce pollutant loads (e.g., apply successful BMPs to ranches in other watersheds, sample 28 outfalls, etc.)
- (3) Seek grant amendment. Discuss with SFEI the possibility of amending SFEI's Phase II grant's Scope of Work to better align with the goals of the CCA-e.g., include tasks to complete a watershed assessment (WA), develop Action Plan, etc.
- (4) Seek additional funding to complete the WA-consider hiring another consultant to take the assessment and reformat, rewrite, etc., consider asking State Coastal Conservancy for funds to bridge gaps. (Kellyx noted that it was around \$200k for Pillarcitos Watershed)
- (5) Consider identifying a Project Manager to oversee both the tech team and the CCA pilots; could consider specifically identifying Project Manager and roles in amended grant-also consider finding ways to give Project Manager more authority. [Note This would be at the discretion of the contracting agency (SWRCB) and the Project Manager would not have the authority to change contract requirements or modify contract deliverables without approval from the SWRCB management]
- (6) Consider making the Project Manager the filter between the tech team and SC-review products before they come to the SC to assure they are ready for distribution, determine which portions of deliverables need review and what kind of SC input is needed, etc.

Next steps/Action Items:

- (1) Lisa and Jack (CCC) will talk to Regional Board, State Board about the issues raised at this June 19 meeting and consider steps for moving forward.
- (2) Above agencies will meet with SFEI/ABAG to discuss issues raised, expectations, and recommendations on process to move forward.
- (3) Lisa will check in with SFEI to determine timeline for receiving SC comments on TM, determine what the TM is intended to be (e.g., whether any deliverable for the State Board, a stand-alone report, etc.), and will determine which sections of TM might be excerpted for SFEI's Final Report. After meeting with SFEI/ABAG re: issues and expressing that the SC has provided extensive comments and suggested revisions, Lisa will forward comments.
- (4) Lisa will get back to the SC after the meetings with SFEI/ABAG to determine next steps for moving forward.

Next regular SC meeting: Thursday, **August 2, 10am-12 pm.** (There may be additional special meetings before then.)