

Interagency Ecological Program Stakeholder Meeting

October 1, 2015

1:00-2:30pm

Dept. of Water Resources
3500 Industrial Blvd, Rm 119
West Sacramento, CA 95691



Interagency Ecological Program

COOPERATIVE ECOLOGICAL
INVESTIGATIONS SINCE 1970

Attendees:

Shawn Acuna, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Lauren Bauer, Kern County Water Agency (via phone)
Kelsey Cowin, State & federal Contractors Water Agency
Matt Dekar, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Gregg Erickson, CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Sakura Evans, CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Karen Gehrts, CA Dept. of Water Resources
Alejo Kraus-Polk, UC Davis
Holly Long, San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (via phone)
Lynda Smith, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Ted Sommer, CA Dept. of Water Resources
Stephani Spaar, CA Dept. of Water Resources
David Van Rijn, US Bureau of Reclamation

- 1. Welcome, introductions, staffing updates, recap last stakeholder meeting, and consideration of agenda** (David Van Rijn)
 - The last Stakeholder meeting was held May 15, 2015.
 - A draft of the Governance documents were shared with stakeholders in late April, and no written comments were received.
 - If Stakeholders have comments or questions about any of the governance documents, please contact Gregg Erickson at any time.
- 2. Update on the IEP Science Agenda** (Matt Dekar)
 - The Science Agenda is being developed to inform the IEP Work Plan by identifying near-term science priorities. Eventually, the Science Agenda will exist on a 5yr timeframe, but the first iteration will be on a 2yr timeframe because the IEP is currently lacking a Lead Scientist to direct that effort, and the Science Management Team (SMT) would like to use the first Science Agenda as a trial and learning experience for future iterations.
 - To initiate this effort, input was solicited from IEP Directors, Project Work Teams (PWTs), Stakeholders, and the SMT. The input was organized and the SMT is currently in

the process of prioritizing that information by using a conceptual model as a framework. The conceptual model ranges from large scale drivers down to the species level, and also incorporates management actions across all levels. Since developing the conceptual model, the SMT has also identified five core themes to focus the Science Agenda, including: Native Species, Invasives, Drought/Climate, Restoration, and Productivity. Next, the SMT will identify key elements across all five themes, including: tools, science needs, coordination, technology, datasets, etc., recognizing the importance of long-term monitoring and synthesis as we move forward.

- This will also be an iterative process, so that as we move forward, we will continually revisit the conceptual model to make sure everything is functioning as planned. In addition to the conceptual model the SMT developed for the Science Agenda, related conceptual models from related efforts and partner agencies (SAIL, MAST, SAA, etc) will also be assessed to leverage those efforts and link them to our own.
- The current plan is to develop a first draft to present to the IEP Directors in December 2015. After the Directors have provided their input, a more complete draft will be made public for Stakeholders to review. The goal is to test out a final version of the Science Agenda with the development of the 2017 Work Plan.
- It is important that stakeholders understand that not every piece of input can be made a priority, but all of the input will be catalogued and retained on file for review. All input is reviewed and given full consideration, but the IEP Science Agendas must be distilled down to a selection of priorities that are achievable within a 5yr time span. And, it will be these priorities that guide the development of the Work Plan, provide guidance to the IEP Directors when making decisions about IEP projects, as well as partner agencies looking to collaborate on current and future projects. The Science Agenda will also be a useful tool when planning multi-year budgets, allowing IEP and others to see what is coming down the line and how projects have been prioritized temporally.
- If Stakeholders have any comments or questions about the Science Agenda, contact Gregg Erickson by the last week of October. Stakeholder input is always welcome and encouraged. Stakeholder input is valuable for the development of our priorities, and we hope to continue getting feedback and engage additional stakeholder groups in the future. Let us know how we did, how we're doing, and how we can improve.
- Who else should we invite to stakeholder meetings? Flood control management

3. **Update on the 2016 IEP Work Plan** (Gregg Erickson)

- We shared the 2016 Work Plan with the Directors on 09/22/15 and they approved it with the understanding that final edits will show up at the December Directors Meeting.
- Drought operations remain a high priority, and everything done in 2015 will carry over into 2016.
- Microcystis sampling was added to EMP this year.
- Three new elements were added under Directed Research: Effective Population Size, FRP Tidal Wetland Restoration Monitoring Pilot – Phase II, and SmeltCam Early Warning Studies.

- There is the possibility of additional projects being added to 2016, but nothing has been approved by the SMT yet.
 - Under Special Studies, there was no new solicited research. All of the resources were directed toward drought monitoring.
 - Compliance and Baseline Status and Trends are similar to previous years.
 - eDNA is also coming up in 2016, and they will be doing it with the high frequency sampling.
4. **Update on the Governance Framework and Business Practices Review** (Stephani Spaar)
- The IEP Governance Framework and Communication & Engagement Plan are currently posted on the IEP website (<http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/>).
 - Since May, there have been no major changes to the documents, and in June the Directors approved the documents. We are currently in the “test drive” phase with plans for our first internal review of the “test drive” in November.
 - The intent of the documents was to look at how the IEP operates, and we hired consultants to help with this process. They developed recommendations and guidelines, and identified three priority areas: Communications, Core Processes, and the Governance Framework.
 - We also have the responses to the roadmap, which will be posted on the website in the near future, and will be used as a tracking mechanism moving forward.
 - The Communication & Engagement Plan specifically focused on internal and external communications, milestones, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, and the need for a Communication and Information Manager position within IEP.
 - The Governance Framework document specifically focused on the Core Processes of IEP, Roles and Responsibilities, and Teams. Some other key issues were also identified that will be included in our review, including how the IEP handles emergencies and unexpected projects, Take management, MOUs, and the Conflict of Interest policy.
 - These efforts also resulted in some changes to IEP structure, including transitioning the Management Team (MT) to the Science Management Team (SMT), the establishment of the Program Support Team (PST), and adding new positions to IEP Program Management and Synthesis.
 - A goal of these efforts is increased transparency, and the hired consultants provided good recommendations for how to achieve that goal. We are working to address that issue, but welcome any input or suggestions from the Stakeholders. Please don’t wait for the IEP to request feedback or present a topic for discussion. If Stakeholders have suggestions or questions at any time, please contact Gregg Erickson.
 - Also, the Governance Framework and Communication & Engagement Plan function as guidelines or frameworks on a large scale – these are not fine scale documents. This allows the IEP to maintain some flexibility and adapt to changes. They are intended to represent a balance between flexibility and transparency. Also, not all of the recommendations and outcomes from the consultants have funding for implementation yet, so please be patient.

5. **Roundtable Discussion, Questions, and Updates from Partner Agencies (All)**

- Current status of SAIL: SAIL is in the end stages of completing sub-models of the Conceptual Model, and the next step is a lot of thought about the gaps and the monitoring needs. This should be shared in a report in February along with gap and monitoring recommendations.
- IEP Annual Workshop is scheduled for April 20-22, 2016 at Lake Natoma Inn in Folsom, CA.
- Sean Hayes has been confirmed as the Interim Lead Scientist for IEP. He is scheduled to begin working with the IEP in November/December, and will be in this role for approximately 9 months.
- A new exam has been developed for the permanent Lead Scientist position, and anyone interested should contact Rainer Hoenicke (DSP) for additional information.
- DWR has released an announcement for a Program Manager II exam. Contact Karen Gehrts (DWR) for more information.
- If any Stakeholders have events or meetings they would like to include on the IEP Calendar, please send the information to Sakura Evans.
- SFCWA is starting their strategic planning session now, followed by an update of the research plan.
- Metropolitan is trying to get Longfin Smelt contracting through. They are also trying to get a USGS boat retrofitted, but that process has proven rather difficult. The new contract was executed last month, and they are adding two booms to the Turning Tide.
- CDFW is getting two new boats over the next year.
- Alejo Kraus-Polk (UC Davis) is conducting research looking at human use of restored and naturalized areas in the greater Delta region, and would appreciate help engaging State/Federal land managers to complete an online survey.

6. **Wrap up (David Van Rijn)**

- Three action items for Stakeholders:
 - If you would like to provide input on the development of the IEP Science Agenda, please send comments to Gregg Erickson by the end of October 2015.
 - Please share what science priorities you feel the IEP should be focusing on.
 - Please share your calendars (events, deadlines, meetings, etc.) with Sakura Evans.