

**Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program  
Regional Water Management Group Meeting  
March 15, 2017**

**Location: Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, Monterey, CA**

**RWMG Attendees:**

Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc.  
Ross Clark – Central Coast Wetlands Group  
Lisa Emanuelson – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
Monique Fountain – Elkhorn Slough Reserve  
Brenda Granillo – California Water Service Company  
Sarah Hardgrave – Big Sur Land Trust (for Rachel Saunders)  
Tom Harty – Monterey County Resource Management Agency  
Bridget Hoover – Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency  
Heather Lukacs – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW)  
Mike McCullough – Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency  
Heidi Niggemeyer – City of Salinas (for Gary Petersen)  
John Olson – California State University Monterey Bay  
Paul Robins – Resource Conservation District Monterey County

**Non-RWMG Attendees:**

Matt Anthony – Integrated Crop  
Rachid Ait-Lasri – State Water Resources Control Board  
John Bramers – Merrill Farms  
Jeff Condit – Monterey Regional Storm Water Management Program  
Tom Gibbons – Enza Zaden Research  
Mike Godwin – Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Paul Greenway – MNS Engineers, Inc.  
James Gregory – ESA Environmental Hydrology  
Norm Groot – Monterey County Farm Bureau  
Samantha Cho – Harris & Associates  
John Hunt – UC Davis  
Matthew Keeling – Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Colby Pereira – Costa Farms  
Susan Robinson – Greater Monterey County IRWM Program Director  
Cheryl Sandoval – Monterey County Health Department, Drinking Water Program

**Meeting Minutes**

**1. Brief Introductions.**

**2. IRWM Plan Update: AB 1249:** Susan began by explaining that the Greater Monterey County Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) has received funds through an IRWM Planning Grant to develop a plan to identify and address nitrate, arsenic, perchlorate, and hexavalent chromium impacts on communities in the region (per AB 1249). A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been convened. One of the purposes of this meeting was to bring together the TAC and the RWMG to kick off the AB 1249 planning process. Susan introduced the TAC members and noted that Karen Nilsen (Nilsen & Associates) would be responsible for gathering and summarizing data, and would be co-facilitating the AB 1249 planning process with Susan. TAC members are:

1. Horacio Amezcuita – San Jerardo Cooperative, Inc. (DAC representation)

2. Monique Fountain – Elkhorn Slough Reserve
3. Elizabeth Krafft – Monterey County Water Resources Agency
4. Heather Lukacs – Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (DAC representation)
5. Eric Tynan – Castroville Community Services District
6. Matt Keeling – Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
7. Cheryl Sandoval – Monterey County Environmental Health
8. Paul Greenway – MNS Engineering

Susan read the AB 1249 text, briefly explained the objectives of the planning process, and reviewed the project schedule (now through end of December 2017). Since Karen Nilsen was unable to attend the meeting, Susan presented a summary of the data sources that Karen Nilsen was planning on using to collect nitrate, arsenic, chrom-6, and perchlorate data. These include:

- Monterey County Health Department data (for water systems serving 2-199 connections)
- GeoTracker GAMA (Groundwater Ambient Monitoring & Assessment) online information system
- USGS domestic well survey
- Samples collected from EJCW and Community Engineering Corps during the DAC Plan project (this planning process is still under way)

Karen was also considering geologic or hydrology reports or maps that might be useful in pinpointing where naturally occurring arsenic or chrom-6 would likely be found. Susan added that water quality data for water systems with more than 200 service connections is collected by the State Water Board Division of Drinking Water.

Cheryl shared a map that she has been working on that shows current nitrate, arsenic, and chrom-6 levels of all small water systems in Monterey County. The map is still in progress, and for now shows most of the local small data (2-4 connections) and some state small data (5-14 connections); data for small public systems (15-199 connections) need to be added still. Heather gave a brief illustration of the map using as an example one of the small disadvantaged communities (DACs) in northern Monterey County that they have been working with for the DAC Plan.

Cheryl said that the County has all of the data though the map currently shows only about half of the systems; some of the systems still need to be tested for chrom-6. The County does not sample for perchlorate in the local and state small systems. Cheryl said she hasn't found perchlorate to be an issue. Matt Keeling noted that perchlorate exceedences can be searched through USGS and GAMA data. Cheryl noted that all of the data is "most current" (nitrate is tested for small systems every two years, arsenic every five years; chrom-6 data is new, since they only started testing for chrom-6 a year ago; for public systems, nitrate is tested every year).

Monterey County conducts the sampling for small systems, while public water systems (200+ connections) conduct their own sampling, and that data is held in the State Board's database. Cheryl referred to the website "Drinking Water Watch" to access this data. Cheryl has "back door" access to this data that makes querying a bit easier than the public access; Susan asked if she would be willing to obtain some of this data for the purposes of the AB 1249 plan, and Cheryl agreed.

Matt concluded that the primary data sources for the AB 1249 plan will be:

- Monterey County data for small systems (state smalls 2-4, local smalls 5-14, small public systems <200)
- State Water Board Division of Drinking Water data for public water systems (200+)
- GeoTracker GAMA (USGS data should be included in GAMA)

Cheryl asked Matt about the nitrate testing required for some private wells located in ag areas. Matt said

this data is available on GeoTracker, but is only partially available to the public. Cheryl noted that the well location information on GeoTracker is no longer confidential (i.e., is now accessible to the public), but Matt said that does not apply to Ag Order data.

Susan then raised the question to the group: Once the data is collected, what approach should the TAC use to develop a plan to address the impacts of these contaminants? For small systems, Cheryl suggested that, after collecting all of the data, the TAC look for the “hot spots” on the maps and concentrate efforts there. Consider possible consolidation for small systems that are located in proximity to larger systems. For public systems (15-199 connections), Cheryl said they already have a good handle on which systems are in violation. The problem is financing. Susan concluded that for those systems the focus should be on finding suitable funding sources to address the problems.

Paul Greenway suggested that for the small systems, the TAC could identify next steps/options for them to consider. This will include funding opportunities. Bridget wondered whether the upcoming IRWM DAC Involvement funds might be used in this way. Heather pointed out that the DAC Plan project team has a pretty good understanding at this point of nitrate exceedences in the small DACs, and they do plan to use DAC Involvement funds as appropriate for those communities; however, the AB 1249 plan will need to address all communities in the region (not just DAC), and not just nitrate but also arsenic, chrom-6, and perchlorate.

Someone else summed up a recommended approach as follows:

- What is the range of different treatment options?
- What are the funding opportunities?
- What are the potential barriers?

Matt said that, generally, assessing the scope of the problem and identifying potential next steps seems like a good approach. Norm added that understanding the regulations (for small systems and public systems) is an important component.

Susan asked (per Karen Nilsen’s request) whether the TAC should also look at 1,2,3-TCP, lead, and TDS. Cheryl responded that the 1,2,3-TCP standard is new, and it may be too early to include this; TDS is not a health-based standard; and she didn’t think lead was much of a problem in Monterey County – small systems are not required to test for it. The group agreed that the AB 1249 plan should just focus on the four contaminants. There was also a short discussion about the County’s ordinances regarding Point-of-Entry (POE) and Point-of-Use (POU) treatment systems. Cheryl emphasized that consolidation should always be considered first; if not affordable or feasible, only then might POU conceivably be an acceptable interim option.

Susan said the next TAC meeting for the AB 1249 plan will probably be in April.

**3. Greater Monterey County Storm Water Resource Plan:** This was the first of several TAC/stakeholder meetings to obtain input into the Greater Monterey County Storm Water Resource Plan (SWRP). The “milestone” for discussion at today’s meeting was: Defining Objectives. John Hunt, the Project Manager for the SWRP planning effort, led this discussion.

John began by providing some background about the SWRP and introduced the planning team (John, Ross Clark and Kevin O’Connor with Central Coast Wetlands Group, Bridget Hoover and Lisa Emanuelson with Monterey Bay Sanctuary, Susan Robinson; and Jim Oakden with Coastal Conservation & Research will be administering the grant).

John explained that the RWMG will act as the TAC for this planning effort; it seemed logical for the RWMG to be the TAC since the RWMG is comprised of all of the appropriate organizations/agencies needed for the TAC, and the RWMG will eventually need to approve the SWRP for incorporation into the

IRWM Plan. Bridget added that the “stakeholder group” is comprised of the broader IRWM listserv, and that there is also a technical group of modelers who will work with the planning team. She said the Sanctuary would be facilitating two separate stakeholder workshops, apart from the RWMG meetings. John asked everyone to let the planning team know if there were particular individuals or groups who should be targeted for stakeholder outreach.

Prior to the meeting, John had sent out draft objectives for the SWRP. He explained that these essentially came from the SWRP Guidelines and the IRWM Plan. The discussion began with Water Quality objectives. Someone commented about their focus on regulatory standards. Ross said that linking water quality objectives to standards will provide geographic focus sites and numeric objectives.

Someone asked whether projects would be scored against the objectives, and John responded no, not directly. Projects must address at least two different benefits (e.g., water quality and flood). Elizabeth commented that the wording of the water quality objectives implied that a project would need to be tied to a TMDL project. John said the intention was to tie projects to reductions in loads, reduced pollutants. Norm cautioned against crossing over into existing regulatory programs, which already require some of these things. Bridget said that the point of this planning process is, in part, to get grant funding to support projects in doing that.

Jeff said he thought the real intent of the SWRP Guidelines was to *increase water supply*. John said, from his conversations with State Water Resources Control Board staff, it seemed that water supply and water quality were co-dominant, with environment, flood, and community as secondary. Rachid (State Water Board) agreed with that.

Ross said that all of these goals and objectives are not necessarily applicable in all geographic areas of the planning region. Modeling will enable the planning team, for example, to highlight the areas where flood management is particularly important, and to generally target what types of projects are needed in which geographic areas to achieve certain objectives.

There were comments with regard to specific objectives, and several revisions were made to the objectives list. Regarding the third water quality objective (“Promote projects to reestablish natural water drainage treatment and infiltration systems, or mimic natural system functions to the maximum extent feasible”), someone suggested looking at the Salinas River model, which has been very valuable in reducing flooding. Another example of this, Ross added, is Carr Lake.

Ross said they hoped to use modeling and the TAC to ensure that one project doesn’t conflict with another. John said that the planning team is trying to identify opportunities and problems, but they also want to start identifying projects that people want to propose – because that will inform the plan as well. John said there will probably be a call for projects in the summer, but they would like to know about any projects now that exist.

The next SWRP TAC/RWMG meeting will be on August 16. Between now and then the planning team will gather as much information as they can, and at the August meeting they will review that information along with the models. Jeff offered help with mapping (Jeff and Ross will discuss at a later time).

**4. Other Business.** There was no other business.

*The next RWMG meeting is scheduled for April 19, 2017, 1:30PM – 3:30PM, at Moss Landing Marine Labs.*