

RE: Meeting Summary of the Wetland Monitoring Group (WMG) meeting held Tuesday, December 11, 2007, from 1—3:30 p.m. at the Water Board (WB) office, 1515 Clay Street, Room 1411, Oakland, CA. 94612. For questions or comments, contact Andree Breaux at 510-622-2324 or abreaux@waterboards.ca.gov.

Attendees: Bob Batha (BCDC), Andree Breaux (WB), Marcia Brockbank (SFEP), Agnes Farres (WB), Naomi Feger (WB), Arthur Feinstein (Joint Venture), Jessica Hamburger (BCDC), Judy Kelly (SFEP), Michael May (SFEI), Peggy Olofson (Olofson Environmental), Luisa Valiela (U.S. EPA), Meredith Williams (SFEI).

The meeting covered the following:

1. Marcia Brockbank is retiring from the San Francisco Estuary Project after many years of service and devotion to improving the San Francisco Estuary. She will be sorely missed. We welcome her replacement, Judy Kelly, who has many years of experience with San Francisco Bay environmental issues.

2. The WMG has had \$8,000 to spend on monitoring projects or activities for each of three years: 2006, 2007, and 2008. The 2007 budget was approved with the remaining \$1,500 (rolled over from 2006) going to SFEI at its request to develop a Wetland Tracker component that will alert WB staff of due dates for regulatory projects (e.g., monitoring reports). SFEI will also incorporate a layer on the Wetland Tracker that will provide wetland project names and, if possible, stream and reference site names.

Proposed Budget for 2008: In addition to the 3 items on the attached sheet, Arthur Feinstein suggested that some funds go to a community outreach effort for wetland monitoring projects such as a class room and field day for the public and agencies on the South Bay Salt Ponds, North Bay projects, and/or use of the California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM)¹. There may be some funds remaining from the \$3,750 allocated to the Salt Pond or other Monitoring Review Team (MRT) review, depending on whether the MRT reviews the South Bay Salt Pond (SBSP) project. Steve Ritchie, Executive Project Manager for the SBSP project is considering having the MRT review it and, if that happens, it is likely to be in early 2008. If remaining funds are available we should know that before the next WMG meeting on 5/13/08 at which time the WMG can approve them for an outreach project; if not, Arthur will investigate organizing such a class at a minimal cost. Meredith Williams offered SFEI's free services for the instruction.

3. Updates:

- BCDC's Wind Wave Workshop will be held in 2008. There is now general agreement that wind waves can potentially delay or even preclude sedimentation and colonization by wetland plants in large tidal restoration projects and that wind wave energy management should be worked into wetland restoration design where appropriate. Several wetland restoration experts will give presentations on how wind wave energy can be managed to achieve project goals, including tidal marsh formation, habitat diversity, and shoreline

¹ Arthur Feinstein reported after the meeting that Florence LaRiviere of the Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge is willing to organize a monitoring workshop in 2008 to discuss CRAM and some of the other monitoring elements we discussed.

protection, with high certainty at the least cost. For questions, contact Jessica Hamburger (jessicah@bcdc.ca.gov)

- SFEI has begun work on its 3-year Prop 50 grant entitled *Bay Area Model for Wetland Assessment*. Tier 1 will deal with mapping wetland and riparian areas in all of the San Francisco Bay WB's jurisdiction (111 USGS quad sheets); Tier 2 will conduct wetland and riparian assessments and establish reference networks for CRAM sites; and Tier 3 will develop protocols and a strategy for a Wetland Regional Monitoring Program. For questions, contact Meredith Williams (Meredith@sfei.org) or A.Breaux (Abreaux@waterboards.ca.gov)
- SFEI continues to work with the Water Board (WB) to develop the Wetland Tracker. For the first year that it was required as a permit condition (Aug 2006- Aug 2007), SFEI received 28 projects and the WB issued certification conditions for about 35 projects, which means that most applicants were complying with the condition. However, the maps SFEI received are not always appropriate, so SFEI may offer a training to consultants and agencies on how to provide the GIS data. The WB is hiring a student to assist with the Wetland Tracker to help determine which projects are in compliance. SFEI is about to finalize version 40 of the form which is similar to the version used in southern CA. SFEI will also make project names available on the Wetland Tracker. For questions contact Michael May (mmay@sfei.org) or A.Breaux (ABreaux@waterboards.ca.gov).
- Progress of Salt Pond Restorations in the Bay: Napa Plant Site received a WB permit in July 2007; Inner Bair Island has received certifications from the agencies in 2007 and expects to go before the WB in 2008 for a WDR; a draft 401 application has been submitted to the WB & BCDC (?) for the South Bay Salt Ponds.
- Invasive cordgrass eradication efforts continue and have been very successful for 2007. Unfortunately new populations were found in the Petaluma River tidal marsh, along the Napa shoreline, at a Caltrans mitigation site on the east side of the Napa River, and generally further up the watersheds than previously found. CA. clapper rail populations are being closely monitored and do not appear to be harmed by *Spartina* removal. The group discussed how to address the risks that new tidal marsh restoration projects pose since they often provide ideal conditions for invasive hybrids to establish new colonies. Best Management Practices for controlling invasive cordgrass should be followed and can be found at <http://www.spartina.org>. For more information contact Peggy Olofson (peggy@spartina.org).
- The Subtidal Goals Project has produced a *Report on the Subtidal Habitats and Associated Biological Taxa in San Francisco Bay* and a Fall 2007 Newsletter is available at http://www.bcdc.ca.gov/pdf/planning/SHGP_f2007nltr.pdf. The recommendations for subtidal habitats will be ready after another 6-12 months. For additional information see BCDC's website (<http://www.bcdc.ca.gov/>).

Please send comments to Andree Breaux at abreaux@waterboards.ca.gov or 510-622-2324. The next WMG Meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday May 13' 2008 from 1:30 – 4:00** (note later time to give people time for lunch & commuting).