

-Meeting Summary-

September 13, 2011 - (12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. PDT)

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m., September 13, 2011, by the Chair of the Delta Independent Science Board (ISB), Dr. Richard Norgaard. Eight members of the Delta ISB were present for the meeting: Brian Atwater, Tracy Collier, Michael Healey, Edward Houde, Judy Meyer, Richard Norgaard, Vince Resh and John Wiens. Jeffrey Mount and Elizabeth Canuel were absent.

Disclosure of Incompatible Activities:

Atwater disclosed that he had been asked to assist with subsurface mapping in the Delta for the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) possibly associated with the identification of new water conveyance options. Atwater agreed only to allow access to his files as reference materials and provided referrals to other geologists who might be able to do the actual work.

Delta Science Program Staff in attendance:

Marina Brand and Lauren Hastings

2. Lead Scientist Recruitment Update

Norgaard provided the update. Dr. Peter Goodwin was informed that the Delta ISB would recommend him for the position. However, Goodwin indicated that he had some conflicts that needed to be resolved before he could respond. Resh and Meyer wrote to Goodwin to encourage him to accept the position. Dahm and Healey will follow-up with phone calls over the next couple of days to provide additional encouragement. In addition, Norgaard will contact Goodwin to let him know that Norgaard has been asked to be involved in the University of Maryland's new Environmental Synthesis Center which might be a source of additional research monies for work in the Delta.

3. Finalize and Approve Comments on Fifth Staff Draft of the Delta Plan for Submittal to the Delta Stewardship Council (action)

This discussion item focused on the draft memo to the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC) that had been prepared by Norgaard, circulated among the Board members, and posted on the Delta ISB meeting website.

For format, it was agreed that the memo would state that the Broad Recommendations are provided by the entire Board, but that the chapter-by-chapter and editorial comments are provided by individual members and reviewed by Norgaard and Healey.

Four Broad Recommendations

Integration – Collier suggested that the memo be clear about which chapters are considered policy chapters and Atwater suggested referring to the chapters by number rather than by title. Hastings noted that on the first page, near the bottom it is stated “...tradeoffs with other policy goals...” and felt that the language should be clarified so that it is clear this statement is not referring to the coequal goals.

Adaptive Management – Atwater stated that the second paragraph is too prescriptive and Wiens suggested revising it to highlight the skill sets that are needed and to state that agencies need to be appropriately staffed. Hastings added that the reference to “scientist-managers” needed to be defined. Norgaard responded that this refers to those that are comfortable at the interface of science and management.

Monitoring Needs and Performance Measures – Houde stated that he thought it was good to highlight successful programs. The Chesapeake Bay program has some good elements as well as flaws. The flaws should be recognized. Collier requested that the phrase “...somewhat less complex ...” be removed. Hastings said that the Science Plan will also address how better monitoring will be coordinated and carried out.

Science Needs – No comments were made.

Chapter-by-Chapter Recommendations

Norgaard agreed to make the distinction between Board and individual comments. Wiens, Norgaard and Meyer stated that the line-by-line comments slowed the flow and should be moved to a section at the end of the memo.

Chapter 1 – No comments were made.

Chapter 2 – Meyer pointed out that there are two different sets of comments regarding page 39, lines 16-17 of the Delta Plan and asked that the second set of statements be struck from the memo.

Although there was discussion on merging the more specific comments with the more general comments, the Board decided not to do that.

Collier and Meyer questioned the comment made on page 45, lines 28-32 of the Delta Plan. Houde wrote the statement and he felt it was appropriate. Collier agreed to review it again.

Healey requested that the last paragraph be moved to the general comments section.

Chapter 3 – Healey asked that “...thus far...” be removed in the first sentence.

Chapter 4 – Healey felt that the tone of this chapter should be softened but Meyer stated that she liked the tone as it clearly expresses the Board’s concerns. Healey stated that the phrase “...Plan is hostage...” should be changed to “overly dependent”. Myer also recommended that the bolded Specific Comments be moved to the general comments section.

Brand agreed to email the version of the memo that Collier had edited in track changes to all members so that they could add their edits.

Chapter 5 – Healey noted that the reference to the ERP Conservation Strategy (CS) in the first paragraph was not accurate as only two maps from the CS are actually incorporated into the Delta Plan. Norgaard responded that he would use this as an example of how unclear the Delta Plan is with respect to the incorporation of other agencies’ written plans.

Meyer and Wiens recommended that the issue of tradeoffs be moved to the Broad Categories portion of the memo as this issue should be integrated across the various chapters.

Chapter 6 – Collier requested that an additional sentence be added recommending that the effects of proposed alterations in water conveyance on overall Delta water quality be evaluated soon, possibly as early as July 1, 2012.

Chapter 7 – Atwater and Healey stated that this chapter of the Delta Plan is done poorly and requires significant improvements. Neither suggested any changes to this portion of the memo.

Chapter 8 – Norgaard noted that the language used in this chapter does not have the same scientific demeanor as that found in the other chapters. Wiens thought the memo should include examples of the contradictions that exist between this chapter and other chapters of the Delta Plan. He also thought that this chapter should include a discussion of global economic impacts as a driver in the Delta.

Chapter 9 – Meyer noted that the discussion in this chapter about possible income resulting from carbon offsets seemed inappropriate as the implications of the land management practices that

would be required to implement carbon offsets are not mentioned in any of the other chapters of the Plan.

Meyer moved that the Board accept the memo with the agreed upon changes. This was seconded by Collier and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Public comment (For matters that were not on the agenda, but within subject matter jurisdiction of the Delta ISB)

Val Connor, State and Federal Water Contractors Alliance

Ms. Connor indicated that she had reviewed the draft memo from a science and policy perspective and had no comments on the science. She felt that there may be a misinterpretation of the legislation and will submit policy comments to the Council on the Delta ISB's review of Chapter 4 once the final version of the memo is published.

5. Preparation for next Delta ISB meeting

Hastings outlined the proposed agenda. The October 20-21 meeting will be organized as an educational/informational meeting for the Board regarding those programs specified in the Delta Reform Act of 2009 that requires the Delta ISB to regularly review those programs engaged in scientific research, monitoring, and assessment in support of adaptive management of the Delta.

October 20 will focus on chapters 4-7 of the Delta Plan. The information will be organized in accordance with the overarching three steps of the adaptive management framework contained in chapter 2: plan, do, and evaluate and respond. Science Program staff will organize the information and present it to the Board. Next, agency representatives that have been invited to attend will provide additional information regarding their programs. Then, the discussion will be opened for public comment.

On October 21 the Board will discuss the information that was presented on the previous day. In addition, Joe Grindstaff and Phil Isenberg will be invited to attend in the afternoon to answer any questions that the Board might have. The expected outcome of the two-day meeting is that the Board will determine which programs they will review and the order in which they will be reviewed.

Norgaard noted that he preferred to review programs rather than agencies and wants the agencies brought into the conversation rather than being briefed by them.

Meyer stated that she thought this was a good plan and that it might help Science Program staff develop the Science Plan. Collier added that he liked the idea of Grindstaff and Isenberg attending on the afternoon of the second day.

Norgaard and Meyer also suggested that if Peter Goodwin is available for the Lead Scientist position that he be invited to attend as well.

6. Adjourn

The teleconference was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. PDT.