

CV-SALTS Lower San Joaquin River Committee Meeting Notes
Thursday, June 3, 2010 10:00 pm to 12:30 pm

Attendees:

Dennis Westcot
David Cory
Parry Klassen
Karna Harrigfeld
Lisa Holm

Jose Faria
Debbie Webster
Bobbi Larson
Mark Gowdy
Jeff Willett

Debbie Liebersbach
Rudy Schnagl
Jim Martin
Daniel Cozad

In the absence of a chair for the new committee the Executive Director of the Central Valley Salinity Coalition called the meeting to order at 10:05. Introductions of all present in-house and on teleconference were made. The Committee then commenced to take up the items on the agenda.

1. Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review, Approve Consent Calendar

- a. The Agenda was reviewed and approved by acclamation
- b. Item 1 b, was deferred to the end of the meeting, but when taken up after Item 7 the committee agreed to provide comments to the Draft submitted for review by Dennis Westcot with the item to be approved at the next meeting

DRAFT Mission of the Lower San Joaquin River Committee:

The mission of the Lower San Joaquin River Committee is to provide overall direction and management for the development of objectives for the Lower San Joaquin River for salinity and boron in a management plan as part of the CV-SALTS Initiative.

- c. Daniel recorded the participants in the absence of a sign in sheet.

2. Appoint Chair and Co-Chair for Committee

Item 2 was also deferred to after item 7. When taken up, the group discussed the able and willing chair candidates and secured the nomination of Dennis Westcot and David Cory as Co-Chairs of the committee. The motion to approve was made by Parry Klassen and seconded by Bobbi Larson. The motion was approved with abstention by Dennis Westcot. The Chair will take the gavel at the next meeting.

The recommended co-chairs will be up for approval by the Executive Committee at its regular meeting on June 10, 2010.

3. Background, history and TMDL Status – Regional Board and State Board

Rudy Schnagl provided an excellent review of the status of the project at the CVRWQCB and the transition to his group from Amanda’s group and the efforts that are underway. Rudy also provided a history and background on the project from the TMDL administrative record in 2004 and beyond. He provided a fact sheet on these issues that will be attached to the notes.

Rudy and Mark Gowdy provided background and details on the coordination of the efforts underway at the SWRCB as well. The State Board has \$765,000 from an appropriation from the Cleanup and Abatement Account to work on the effort. This should be done in

coordination with the \$1,000,000 provided to the SWRCB Water Rights Division to work on flow and Salinity in the San Joaquin River.

Brief discussion of contracting issues was held for the group to understand the needs and requirements for the available funding.

An update by Mark Gowdy on the Vernalis/South Delta TMDL was made. In short, most timeline items had slipped about 6 months. SWRCB will attempt to get the science issues documented out later this year (2010) so they can be peer reviewed while the economics and other sections are prepared. A complete draft may be available in the first half of 2011 with a final later in the year. Noted that raising the Vernalis objective is not off the table.

Rudy Schnagl offered to provide a Table of Contents for a basin plan amendment to help in the preparation of the scope and efforts for the group. This will encompass not only numeric objectives but the implementation plan to execute them. It will also need a monitoring plan and a method to tie to the Real Time Management approach in the basin plan.

Discussion of the need for the effort to be a TMDL ensued. After discussion it was agreed that whatever it is, a TMDL may be a starting point, and that at the end of the day it will have to reliably meet the WQOs to satisfy the CVRWQCB, SWRCB and EPA. Discussion of timing to involve EPA to be effective ensued should be continued for resolution. Regardless of all of this, work on determining the present beneficial uses within the river basin can be started right away.

Several statements were provided to shape the discussion by participants:

- Salts are nonstandard pollutants
- Objectives should (must?) be achievable
- Groundwater seepage and upwelling will complicate the issues
- OCAP and VAMP will change flows

Areal extent of Studies

A critical discussion was initiated related to the Area to be covered by the efforts of the Lower San Joaquin River Committee. The segments of the river were discussed and various approaches were considered. Consideration was given to the Mendota Dam to the Merced, Merced to Vernalis and other segments of the river. Additional discussion and decision will be needed in the near future but the working geographic boundary for phase 1 will be the SJ River from the confluence with the Merced to the confluence with the Stanislaus, while the watersheds contributing loads may extend beyond this. While a final decision was not reached it was decided that it was best to approach the effort in phases beginning on the area where the majority of work had been completed as Phase 1.

Participation

Another discussion of importance during the background conversations was a review of participation and those missing that have a stake in the salinity regulation of the San Joaquin.

The group engaged in an open discussion of any parties that may need to be involved in the Committee and provided these initial recommendations.

Wetlands have a significant stake, Daniel to contact Joel Miller, David Cory to contact Grasslands and Lisa Holm to contact Sonya Nechanicky for recommendations

Dairy and Food Processing - have a stake but may need to be brought in on specific issues, however they should be on the Committee Mailing List. Daniel Cozad to add Trudi Hughes to the mailing list and to solicit an appropriate participant from Western United Dairies

Environmental - Group should solicit participation from environmental groups interested in water quality, NRDC was suggested, and while they may not be able to actively participate they too can be added to the mailing list to keep up to date.

South Delta and Delta – Groups in the South Delta and Delta have a stake but may be more associated with what goes on below Vernalis.

4. Report on Status of Upstream Report/Comments - Regional Board

Rudy also provided a report of several comments received and one request for extension which was granted. All comments will be available on the web soon.

5. Cooperative Planning Meeting with Committee and Regional Board Staff

June 30 was selected as the best day for most participants for the cooperative planning meeting. The meeting will be in the training room at the CVRWQCB and will review all work to date and the needs and issue to be discussed and resolved. The Regional Board will prepare and present the background. Lisa Holm and Gene Lee will be available to discuss work on the MAA and the RTMP. Karna Harrigfeld will provide items or a list of items from her file to be available. Discussion of the web transfer of documents resulted identification of problems with the links.

6. Discuss Upper San Joaquin Salt and Boron Basin Planning Study

The committee requested Daniel to draft a preliminary agenda for discussion and revision based on the discussion:

30th Agenda

- a. History and background
 - i. Work accomplished and needs identified
 - ii. Regional Board issues related to the effort
 - iii. Detailed Review of Vernalis TMDL and Basin Plan
 - iv. Real Time Management and base flow discussion
 - v. What is being learned in other studies
 - vi. MAA and compliance
- b. Initial scoping and information needs
 - i. Board required elements
 - ii. Implementation needs

- iii. Data and conceptual model
- iv. Data and simulation modeling
- c. Schedule development and deadlines
- d. Budget development and procurement
- e. Funding
 - i. Existing Funding from CAA allocation
 - ii. Funding for Environmental Support
 - iii. Mechanisms to transfer to CVSC

Questions to be answered

Several questions were suggested and the opportunity was opened to all to ask questions for the meeting to be more successful:

1. Why are we doing this?
2. What were the original motivations and are they still valid?
3. Are there different reasons, if so what are they?
4. Why do it now, versus later?

7. Next Committee meeting July 27, 2010, update CV-SALTS Calendar

8. Review Conditions Page 2 and Identify items for Executive Committee

Item tabled to the next meeting due to time.

9. LSJRC Committee Adjourned