

MEETING NOTES

Joint Regional Water Quality Monitoring/Middle Santa Ana River TMDL Task Force

September 26, 2022

PARTICIPANTS

Aldo Licitra, Riverside County Flood Control & WCD
Abigail Gomez, City of Jurupa Valley
Amanda Grey, UCR
Ana Montoya-Horn, County of Orange
Anthony Ortega, City of Pomona
Arlene Chun, County of San Bernardino
Barbara Barry, Regional Water Quality Control Board
Becky Dunavant, CDM Smith
Cassandra Sanchez, City of Eastvale
Chris Bland, County of San Bernardino
Cordell Chavez, City of Corona
Cynthia Gabaldon, County of San Bernardino
Dave Woelfel, Regional Water Quality Control Board
James Fortuna, County of Orange
Jacqui Sedighi, County of Orange
Jian Peng, County of Orange
Julie Carver, City of Pomona
Kaitlin Diaz, Regional Water Quality Control Board
Kimberly Colbert, Colbert Environmental Group
Kris Hanson, City of Eastvale
Michael Mori, County of Orange
Mike Roberts, City of Riverside

Nicole deMoet, City of Upland
Nicole Greenwood, City of Riverside
Nisha Wells, City of Chino Hills
Pat Boldt, Milk Producers Council
Patrick Lewis, Regional Water Quality Control Board
Raul Gutierrez, County of San Bernardino
Raymond Hiemstra, Inland RiverKeeper
Rebekah Guill, Riverside County Flood Control & WCD
Rohini Mustafa, Riverside County Flood Control & WCD
Richard Meyerhoff, GEI Consultants
Ryan Kearns, CWE
Steven Wolosoff, CDM Smith
Stormy Osifeso, City of Riverside
Terri Reeder, Regional Water Quality Control Board
Tess Dunham, Kahn, Soares & Conway, LLP
T Milford Harrison, SAWPA
Bruce Whitaker, SAWPA
Kelly Rowe, SAWPA
Zyanya Ramirez, SAWPA
Mark Norton, SAWPA
Rick Whetsel, SAWPA

1. Call to Order & Introductions

The MSAR TMDL Task Force Meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Rick Whetsel at SAWPA with all participants participating remotely, due to COVID-19 related social distancing restrictions.

2. Approval of Meeting Notes from the August 29, 2022 MSAR Task Force Meeting

The August 29, 2022 meeting notes were approved as posted.

Regional Water Quality Monitoring Meeting Items:

1. Update: 2022-23 Santa Ana River Regional Bacteria Monitoring Program

Priority 3 Waterbodies

Michael Mori, County of Orange provided an update on the monitoring of Priority 3 Waterbodies in Orange County. This included discussion of monitoring results for Serrano Creek, Borrego Creek, Peters Canyon Wash, San Diego Creek Reaches 1 & 2 and Bolsa Chica Channel.

Priority 3 Waterbodies include bacteria impaired waters without an existing TMDL. These sites are monitored for five consecutive-weeks each dry season to characterize current fecal bacteria concentrations.

Follow-up to the presentation Regional Board staff requested if the County of Orange could assist Regional Board staff in working with the City of Newport Beach to setup up a program to monitor locations within the City's jurisdiction. The County of Orange suggested setting up a call with Regional Board staff and the City of Newport to further discuss this issue. A concern being that some of the monitoring locations of interest are on private property, which the County does not have right-of-way access.

Regional Board staff inquired if the County had identified any sources of contamination for any of the Priority 3 waters. The County responded that they are still in the process of investigating for key sources of contamination.

A copy of the County of Orange presentation is available on the SAWPA website under Agendas and Meeting Materials: <https://sawpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/2022-SAR-BMP-SAWPA.pdf>.

PIG2BAC and Elm Grove Beach, Lake Elsinore Monitoring

Steven Wolosoff /CDM Smith provided an update on the pig DNA marker (Pig2Bac) monitoring in the Santa Ana River and enterococcus results at Elm Grove Beach, Lake Elsinore.

Preliminary review of the Pig2Bac marker monitoring results showed high concentrations at MWD Crossing and Pedley, but not at any other upstream or downstream locations. This may help to explain the contamination in that section of the Santa Ana River; however, upstream of MWD Crossing at the Mission bridge site where there were no or low Pig2Bac marker detections monitoring results revealed high concentrations of E.coli. This is concerning to our consultants in that there appears to be a significant source of contamination in the river that, upstream of MWD Crossing that based upon previous investigations cannot be linked to MS4, human, dog, or pig contamination.

Discussion ensued regarding if this source of contamination could possibly be the result of naturalized colonies of bacteria in the sediments. This was followed by discussion regarding if the original species that seeded the bacteria in the sediments is natural or related to human activity and if viruses are active in the bacteria re-growth.

It was suggested that field cameras be installed to try to identify the type of wildlife present around the Mission Bridge site.

Cynthia Gabaldon representing the County of San Bernardino informed participants of the CASQA Bacteria Summit held on September 14-16. She noted that the questions we are discussing today were discussed at the Summit and recommended participants to take a look at these materials available through the CASQA site: <https://www.casqa.org/events/bacteria-summit> , to access the videos please click on the link to “Additional Information for Virtual Viewers” <https://video.calepa.ca.gov/#/> .

Steven Wolosoff then followed-up with an update on the Lake Elsinore, Priority 1 level monitoring at Elm Grove Beach. The issue is that since moving the monitoring location from the Boat Launch site to Elm Gove Beach, water quality results have shown much higher Enterococcus results often exceeding the geomean objective. One hypothesis is that the high levels of Enterococcus may be related to high algae concentrations, where algal mats provide shading for the Enterococcus, possibly creating an environment for the regrowth of naturalized colonies of Enterococcus bacteria. To further investigate this issue, it was suggested that the Task Force consider additional monitoring at multiple locations, including the Boat Launch site and to coordinate this monitoring with the overhead satellite passes to better understand the algal concentrations across the lake.

Steven will continue to monitor the issue and will work to develop a scope of work and budget for additional monitoring to be considered by the Task Force for the next dry season monitoring cycle starting in May 2023.

A copy of the CDM Smith presentation is available on the SAWPA website under Agendas and Meeting Materials: https://sawpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/092622_RBMPUpdate.pdf.

2. RWQM Task Force Administration (SAWPA Staff)

Draft FY 2023-24 budget

Rick Whetsel /SAWPA informed the Task Force that a draft FY 2023-24 budget will be sent out to Task Force members for review and approval via email in mid-October.

Steven Wolosoff transition from CDM Smith to GEI Consultants

The Task Force members discussed the potential impacts to work being conducted by CDM Smith for the RWQM Task Force following the announcement by Steven Wolosoff that he will be leaving CDM Smith and taking a new position with GEI Consultants. Consultant staff representing CDM Smith and GEI were requested to step off of the call and return when discussion was completed.

The recommendation of Task Force members in light of this change is for CDM Smith to bring GEI Consultants on board as a sub-contractor to support the contract to implement and oversee the SAR Regional Bacteria Monitoring Program through the balance of the current contract to support the preparation of the FYE 2023 and 2024 Annual Reports, with an emphasis on keeping cost increases at a minimum.

Staff will follow-up with representatives of each consulting firm to address any contractual changes and report back to the Task Force.

MSAR TMDL Meeting Items:

1. Update: Next Steps MSAR TMDLs (Tess Dunham/KSC)

Tess Dunham presented a draft outline for the Technical Report to support the MSAR TMDLs Basin Plan Amendment. Key to this outline are the proposed revisions to the MSAR TMDLs extending the wet weather implementation due date, currently set as December 31, 2025. Tess is currently working on the Consultation Letter to Tribes and CEQA Scoping Public Notice.

She requested feedback and comments on the draft Technical Report outline from the Task Force in two weeks (by October 10th).

A copy of the draft Technical Report outline is available on the SAWPA website under Agendas and Meeting Materials: https://sawpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Draft-Outline_TMDL-Technical-Report_092322.pdf.

2. Update: 2023 MSAR Triennial Report (Steve Wolosoff/CDM Smith & Richard Meyerhoff /GEI)

Steven Wolosoff /CDM Smith provided an update on the 2023 MSAR Triennial Report. This update included a review of all E. coli bacteria results in the Santa Ana River using a longitudinal plot looking at the monitoring locations from Riverside Avenue down to Pedley Avenue.

The key point of interest for this plot being the Mission Avenue monitoring location (WW-Mission). Above this point, up to where the riverbed is considered dry, there are no stormwater inputs; however, at this location the geometric mean target for E. coli is already being exceeded.

Over the years, the Mission Avenue monitoring location has been of great interest to the Task Force. The Task Force has conducted a number of investigations to identify possible sources of contamination in this segment of the river including investigations on recreation, pigs, birds, and homelessness, but none have yet identified a possible source of contamination to account for the high concentrations of E. coli recorded in this segment of the river. The key concern in looking at these data is that if the river is already out of compliance entering the area of influence by MS4 (in the natural segment of the river), then it will not be possible for any remediation by MS4 to bring this upper segment of the river into compliance. Steven stressed the need to figure out what is happening in this segment of the river and what its influence is on the downstream segments of the river. After some discussion, the conversation

circled back around to the concept of regrowth of naturalized colonies of bacteria in the sediments, as was discussed earlier.

At a future meeting, the consulting team will provide the results of further analyses to be conducted as part of the 2023 Triennial Report including a source contribution analysis, homeless encampment study, tier 2 investigations in 2020-2022, longitudinal surveys on Cucamonga and Chino Creeks and regional BMP effectiveness. A draft of the Triennial Report is scheduled to be available for review by December 16, 2022, with a final report due to Regional Board by February 15, 2023.

A copy of the CDM Smith presentation is available on the SAWPA website under Agendas and Meeting Materials: https://sawpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/092622_RBMPUpdate.pdf.

3. Status Update: Bacteria Reduction Implementation Activities

Due to time limitations Rick Whetsel /SAWPA requested this item to be tabled for the next Task Force meeting.

4. TMDL Task Force Administration (SAWPA Staff)

Draft FY 2023-24 budget

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The Task Force members discussed the potential impacts to work being conducted by CDM Smith for the MSAR TMDL Task Force following the announcement by Steven Wolosoff that he will be leaving CDM Smith and taking a new position with GEI Consultants. Consultant staff representing CDM Smith and GEI were requested to step off of the call and return when discussion was completed.

The recommendation of Task Force members in light of this change is for CDM Smith, already having GEI Consultants on board as a sub-contractor to support the contract to prepare the 2023 Triennial Report, is to assign the work tasks to be completed by Steven Wolosoff to GEI Consultants, with an emphasis on keeping cost increases at a minimum.

Staff will follow-up with representatives of each consulting firm to address any contractual changes and report back to the Task Force.

5. Other Business

Arlene Chun SBCFCD informed the Task Force that the County is preparing to do repair work caused by debris from recent storms blowing out parts of the curbing that separates IEUA's RP1 facility effluent from MS4 flows in Cucamonga Creek.

6. Schedule Next Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled as a MSAR TMDL Task Force and is scheduled for Monday, November 7, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business for review, the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.