

Emerging Constituents Program Task Force

July 24, 2023

ATTENDEES:

Babcock Laboratories, Allison Mackenzie*
City of Beaumont, Thaxton Van Belle*
City of Corona, Melissa Estrada*
City of Rialto, Thomas Crowley*
City of Riverside, Bobby Gustafson*
City of Riverside, Farid Boushaki*
EVMWD, Mike Ali*
EVWMD, Lenai Hunter*
EVMWD, Sudhir Mohleji*
EMWD, Al Javier*
IEUA, Bonita Fan*
IEUA, Richard Lao*
IRWD, Jim Colston*
JCSD, Kirols Nashed*
JCSD, Marce Billings*
Kahn, Soares, & Conway, LLP, Theresa (Tess) Dunham*
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Carrie Guo*
OCSD, Matt Smith*
OCWD, Jason Dadakis*
OCWD, Lily Sanchez*
OCWD, Patrick Versluis*
Riverside Public Utilities, Greg Herzog*

Riverside Public Utilities, Drew Faherty*
Riverside Public Utilities, Robin Glenney*
RWQCB, Eric Lindberg*
RWQCB, Maile Gee*
RWQCB, Pamela Ybarra*
SAWPA, Gil Botello*
SAWPA, T. Milford Harrison*
SAWPA, Rachel Gray*
SAWPA, Ian Achimore*
SAWPA, Melissa Bustamonte*
SAWPA, Rick Whetsel*
SAWPA, Haley Gohari*
SBMWD/RIX JPA, Jennifer Shepardson*
SBMWD/RIX JPA, Marissa Flores-Acosta*
SBVMWD, Greg Woodside*
SCCWRP, Dr. Charles Wong*
SWRCB DDW, Oliver Pacifico*
WMWD, Grace Cardenas*
WMWD, Jennifer McMullin*
YVWD, Ashley Gibson*
Yorba Linda WD, Rosanne Weston*
*Participation via conference call

Introductions

The Emerging Constituents (EC) Program Task Force (Task Force) meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. in a virtual Zoom Meeting. Brief introductions were made.

Approval of April 24, 2023 Meeting Notes

Meeting notes were approved as posted.

SCCWRP Constituents of Emerging Concern (CECs) in California Aquatic Ecosystems Panel – Dr. Charles Wong

Dr. Charles Wong, of the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP), provided a presentation titled *Science Advisory Panel for Constituents of Emerging Concern (CECs) in California's Aquatic Ecosystems* as an update on the panel final report. As background, the State of California formed a CEC scientific advisory panel for ambient waters about a decade ago. The panel's 2012 report, adopted by the State, offered a risk assessment framework to prioritize CECs to be monitored. Implementing the framework was difficult due to sparse available data. Since the 2012 report, there have been advancements in technology and data collection so the panel decided to update the report to provide recommendations for monitoring program development for the State. This effort was launched by the re-formed panel in October 2020. Since then, they've met numerous times via videoconference working meetings, and convened in person in February and May 2022. The draft report was released in November 2022. On December 12, 2022, there was a webinar to present the findings to the panel. The [Final Report](#) was submitted to the State in June 2023.

The panel validated the risk-based strategy of prioritizing CECs for monitoring, and addressed data quality issues limiting monitoring. The panel did not produce a CEC monitoring list, but they trained the State Water Board CEC Program (currently executing the work) to vet high quality data and implement the

framework. Effects of the work may become monitoring for statewide, regional, and local levels depending on the circumstances of individual CEC trends.

Major findings from the panel's update to the 2012 version of the report include:

- Affirmed the earlier panel's risk-based framework for CECs: which is based on both chemical occurrence and chemical toxicity. The panel found that this approach remains sound and viable. Sound data is required to aid in effectively implementing the framework.
- Addressed challenges with implementing framework: The panel now has a lot of new information to apply to the framework. The panel's efforts focused on fixing the data to make it sound.
- The occurrence data was not of common quality and some was poor quality data, including many non-detects, missing information, multiple levels of detection limits, undocumented methods and more.
- The panel developed data quality criteria and means to screen the data, so framework can be effective. The panel identified suitable data sources for reliable ecotoxicology data and developed thresholds from data using uniform and consistent metrics.

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

[Monitoring Strategies for Constituents of Emerging Concern \(CECs\) in California's Aquatic Ecosystems](#)

[CEC Ecosystems Panel Webpage](#)

[State Water Board CEC Program website](#)

SCCWRP Santa Ana River Watershed Bioassay Study Status Report – Ian Achimore

Ian Achimore, of SAWPA, talked to Dr. Alvina Mehinto before the Task Force meeting and provided an update regarding SCCWRP's Santa Ana River Watershed Bioassay Study. The draft version of the study has been completed and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) should receive the draft report from SCCWRP in about two weeks for an initial review. Dr. Mehinto mentioned to Mr. Achimore that she did not see any "red flags" in the levels detected for the CECs being monitored. What was found was consistent with the 2019 report prepared by this Task Force. Around the end of August, the study will be ready to be sent out for a 2-week review and comment period for the Task Force members. This is a RWQCB contracted study, and it's focused on the Santa Ana River and its tributaries.

Overview of Survey Results and Recommended Next Steps – Ian Achimore

Mr. Achimore provided a PowerPoint presentation titled *Overview of Survey Results and Recommended Next Steps*. Mr. Achimore reviewed the basis for the Emerging Constituents Program Task Force and the main purpose of the group's initiatives and collaborative work. Over time, the Task Force has evolved to oversee and investigate emerging constituents (ECs), to involve data collection, data management and reporting, and to communicate and conduct outreach on the safety and reliability of tap water. In May 2023, a survey was distributed to the Task Force stakeholders to capture any suggestions on topics or presentations the group would find meaningful. There were 19 individuals from the Task Force that participated in answering the questions. Survey results showed that the highest level of interest revolved around Microplastics, regulatory-based updates from the Regional Board, regulatory-based updates from SAWPA/Task Force's regulatory consultant, and PFAS Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) updates on setting Maximum Contaminant Levels for ECs. After discussion amongst the group, Microplastics continues to be of interest as well as novel-treatment methods for PFAS.

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Regulatory Report and Updates – KSC

The Task Force’s regulatory advisor, Tess Dunham of KSC, provided a PowerPoint presentation titled *Emerging Constituents Task Force Meeting* containing updates on PFAS and microplastics.

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

a. PFAS and ECs Updates

Ms. Dunham reported that the US EPA issued an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in April 2023, which adds 7 additional PFAS/PFOA/PFOS compounds under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) produced a second draft of the Technical Support Document for Public Health Goals (PHGs) regarding PFOA and PFOS. The comment period for that technical support document is July 14, 2023 through August 14, 2023.

b. Microplastics Update

Ms. Dunham reviewed new updates for microplastics. The Ocean Protection Council has called for microplastics monitoring in wastewater effluent and municipal stormwater monitoring starting in 2024 for new and reissued permits, as well as a microplastics pilot monitoring program to evaluate microplastics in agricultural soils, biosolids and runoff. Ms. Dunham also shared that the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project will be conducting microplastics monitoring in 2023 through the Bight Regional Monitoring Program and a street sweeping study to investigate the efficacy of street sweeping and microplastics removal. Ms. Dunham also noted that there is some activity in the Central Valley regarding pyrethroids (pesticides). The Central Valley Regional Water Board has released a [draft research plan](#) for comment in which one of the tasks will be to determine the interactions between pyrethroids and microplastics and how they may effect their presentation in the environment.

Additional activities being conducted in the near future are:

- Proposed Direct Potable Reuse Regulations have comments due on September 8, 2023.
- Draft Primary MCL Hexavalent Chromium public hearing will be held on August 2, 2023.

c. Any New Statewide Investigation Orders

No discussion.

General Update on PFAS and Microplastics – Maile Gee, RWQCB

Maile Gee, of the RWQCB, gave a status update on the work being conducted in the region regarding PFAS and microplastics. Since 2019, investigative orders from the RWQCB were issued to the following industries: municipal solid waste landfills, commercial airports, suspected chromium plating facilities, wastewater treatment plants, refineries and bulk terminals, drinking water supply wells, and possibly fire training areas. Ms. Gee offered to forward links to presentations and data that was presented to the RWQCB in May 2023, and they will be updating the RWQCB again in December with new detection site results. If the group is interested in more comprehensive details on the data, she would be happy to present that to the Task Force at the next meeting.

Ms. Gee also provided some information on a study completed by University of California, Riverside on microplastics.

EC Program Task Force Public Outreach Support Update – Melissa Bustamonte, SAWPA

Melissa Bustamonte, a representative of SAWPA, provided an update on the effort overseen by the Task Force’s consultant, JPW Communications. The revised contract with JPW Communications for the fiscal years ending 2024 and 2025 has been finalized and executed. In August 2023, a meeting will be held for the Emerging Constituents Program Public Outreach Workgroup to generate ideas for branding strategy and outreach initiatives during the two-year contract duration.

Schedule Future Meeting

The next Emerging Constituents Program Task Force is scheduled for Tuesday, October 24th, 2023 at 2:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.