

# Nutrients STAG (Stakeholder Technical and Advisory Group)

March 1, 2016

## Meeting Summary

**Note:** The list of attendees follows the meeting summary. The Central Valley Water Board has developed a webpage for the Nutrient Research Plan project, which can be found at: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water\\_issues/delta\\_water\\_quality/delta\\_nutrient\\_research\\_plan/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/delta_water_quality/delta_nutrient_research_plan/index.shtml) Additional materials from the STAG meeting (e.g., agenda, presentations, background documents) have been posted to the project website at: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water\\_issues/delta\\_water\\_quality/public\\_involvement\\_stag\\_meetings/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/delta_water_quality/public_involvement_stag_meetings/index.shtml). The summary captures the major issues presented and discussed during the meeting, though they are not intended as an exhaustive record of all comments made. Rather the summary is intended to provide participants and other interested parties with a general description of topics addressed and different perspectives on those topics, as well as to record commitments and decisions made by the Group and its members.

### Meeting Objectives

- Accept the charge for the phytoplankton workshop and white paper
- Provide direction to Water Board staff and the Planning Subcommittee for securing the white paper author
- Accept the Modeling White Paper as final
- Update STAG on the progress of the mass balance report
- Update STAG on the Drinking Water Work Group's progress and products
- Update STAG on progress of the nutrient research ranking process

### 1 Introduction and Announcements

There were no substantive announcements. A quorum was established (see list of attendees at end of meeting summary for STAG participants who attended and voted).

### 2 Approve the December 15, 2015 Meeting Summary

The December 15, 2015 meeting summary was approved by consensus.

### 3 Workshop Planning

Janis Cooke summarized the history and status of the current version of the charge to the white paper author and work group. The scope has changed to resemble the structure of the earlier scope developed in January 2015, with its focus on areas of agreement and disagreement, and recommendations on research to address data gaps. The key questions have changed little from the version presented last fall, although edits were made by the planning committee and Regional Board staff.

#### Concerns Raised:

Key points, questions, and other issues raised included:

- It will be very important to establish clarity with the white paper author about

	<p>realistic goals and expectations and to distinguish as needed between the goals of the initial workshop vs the overall white paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The scope should clearly distinguish between questions related specifically to the workshop and those related to the broader overall white paper</li> <li>○ The overall motivating question(s) should include reference to the “relative importance” of nutrients in affecting phytoplankton; this could be one place where language from other white paper charges could be useful</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To the extent possible, language from other white paper charges should be used to ensure consistency of approach</li> <li>• The scope should emphasize that the expert panel and the white paper are expected to bring additional information and expertise to bear, beyond what is provided in background materials or in workshop presentations</li> <li>• The scope should not include any recommendations or decisions about “management activities”       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ However, the scope should ensure that the effort focus on issues relevant to management; this is one role fulfilled by the specific questions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The scope should include language that refers to the importance of other factors beyond just the hypotheses to be considered in the workshop, i.e., the scope should not overly restrict the considerations of the panel and white paper author       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The breadth of expertise of the workshop presenters and expert panel members should help alleviate concerns about an overly narrow focus</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The white paper author will have a role in organizing the workshop structure and finalizing the selection of expert panel members</li> <li>• Several STAG members desired more opportunity to provide additional comments on the draft white paper charge.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commitments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ By a unanimous vote of STAG members present, the STAG conditionally approved the charge with the understanding the edits discussed at this meeting will be incorporated.</li> <li>✓ By a unanimous vote of STAG members present, the STAG agreed to begin the process of selecting the white paper author and to then involve the white paper author in coordination with the planning committee and the STAG in discussions to finalize the workshop structure and process and to select the expert panel.</li> <li>✓ STAG members will provide comments on the draft charge by March 7. The Regional Board staff will send out a revised version on March 8, and STAG members will respond by March 11. This schedule is driven by the Delta Science Program’s (DSP) contracting schedule. The DSP will be contracting directly with the identified white paper author. In order to use the \$21,000 offered by the DSP, the author must be identified by 15 April 2016.</li> <li>✓ Because of overlap with the State Water Board’s expert nutrient panel, the STAG agreed to remove Jan Stevenson from the list of potential white paper authors and to allow Regional Board staff to contact the other 4 candidates in the top category. If needed, the next two candidates could be moved up for consideration.</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>Acceptance of the Modeling White Paper</b></p> <p>Christine Joab guided the STAG through the criteria for approval of white papers and other major products, and presented the process used to develop the final Modeling White Paper. Modeling Science Workgroup members Mike Deas, Phil Trowbridge and Joe Domagalski were available to answer questions.</p>

	<p><b>Commitments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The STAG accepted the Modeling White Paper by a unanimous vote of members present and the document is now final.</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Update on the Mass Balance Document</b></p> <p>Tom Grovhaug provided an update on the mass balance document, which is intended to be a background document to help the workshop author and panel better understand current ambient conditions in the Delta and how they might change in the future when new NPDES upgrades and water recycling projects are implemented. This report builds on earlier work that the Drinking Water Policy Workgroup completed and is comparable in some respects to the recently released SFEI report on nutrient mass balance in the Delta. However, the mass balance report will attempt to assess how ambient conditions might change in the future given existing management plans and commitments, while the SFEI report looks only at current conditions.</p> <p><b>Commitments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regional Board staff will distribute the SFEI report to STAG members</li> <li>✓ Tom Grovhaug and Janis Cooke will work together to finish the draft document</li> </ul>
6	<p><b>Update on the Drinking Water White Paper</b></p> <p>Tom Grovhaug provided an update on the Drinking Water White Paper. The work group met in early January, reviewed the draft document, and members submitted edits and comments. Lynda Smith and Tom Grovhaug are coordinating the next meeting and will be inviting a taste and odor expert to attend. The goal is to incorporate comments and revise the draft document before the next meeting in early April.</p>
7	<p><b>Update on the Nutrient Research Prioritization Process</b></p> <p>Tom Grovhaug provided an update on the efforts of the Prioritization Work Group. The work group held its first meeting in January where they developed a flowchart of the process. They identified two major steps in the process. The first step is a prioritization based on the recommendations and data gaps for each white paper. This would be done prior to developing RFPs for specific research projects. The second step is a process for prioritizing and evaluating the proposals received in response to the RFPs.</p>
8	<p><b>Next Steps and Wrap Up</b></p> <p><b>Action items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise and distribute for review a revised charge for the white paper author and panel</li> <li>• Proceed with the effort to select a white paper author</li> <li>• Proceed with contracting discussions with the Delta Science Program</li> </ul>

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**Record of Decision for the Delta Nutrient Research Plan STAG**

Number	Date	Decision	Type	Yes	No	Abstain
2015-1	07/13/2015	The STAG adopted the Charter Document – Process to Develop a Delta Nutrient Management Strategy as final.	Consensus			
2015-2	07/13/2015	The STAG adopted the Governance Principles and Ground Rules document as final.	Consensus			
2015-3	07/13/2015	The STAG accepted the Cyanobacteria White Paper <i>“Factors affecting Growth of Cyanobacteria With Special Emphasis on the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta”</i> as a final work product from the Cyanobacteria Science Work Group.	Consensus			
2015-4	09/23/2015	The STAG agreed to form a ranking subcommittee that would develop a written evaluation process. The STAG agreed that this evaluation process would be used to rank the research recommendations.	Consensus			
2015-5	09/23/2015	The STAG approved the formation of a joint planning subcommittee with the Bay Area Nutrient Management Steering Committee to assist in organizing the “nutrient forms and ratios” workshop.	Consensus			
2015-5	11/03/2015	The STAG accepted the minor revisions to the Governance Principles and Ground Rules Document and accepted the entire document as final.		8	0	0
2015-6	11/03/2015	The STAG accepted the Macrophyte White Paper as final.		8	0	0
2015-7	11/03/2015	The STAG accepted the Cyanobacteria Knowledge Gaps document as final, with the understanding that Tim Mussen and Paul Bedore would submit a revision on Paul’s comment to Regional Board staff by November 13.		8	0	0
2015-8	12/15/2015	The STAG agreed to revise the name, charge, and process for the ammonium (phytoplankton) work group and to enter into discussions with the Delta Science Program on options for cosponsoring the work group.	Consensus			
2015-9	12/15/2015	The STAG accepted the revised language in the Cyanobacteria Knowledge Gaps document and finalized the entire document.	Consensus			
2016-1	03/01/2016	The STAG approved by consensus the December 15, 2015 Meeting Summary.	Consensus	7	0	0
2016-2	03/01/2016	The STAG conditionally accepted the draft Charge to the White Paper Author and Panel with the understanding that the edits discussed at the meeting will be		7	0	0

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		incorporated. The STAG also approved that Regional Board staff could begin contacting white paper author candidates.				
2016-3	03/01/2016	The STAG approved to begin the process of selecting a white paper author and to involve the author in assisting the planning workgroup and STAG in finalizing the workshop structure and process, and in selecting the expert panel.		7	0	0
2016-3	03/01/2016	The STAG accepted the Modeling White Paper as final.		7	0	0

## Attendees

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Christine Joab	Central Valley Regional Water Board
Janis Cooke	Central Valley Regional Water Board
Jeanne Chilcott	Central Valley Regional Water Board
Brock Bernstein	Facilitator

### Stakeholder and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) - Interest Group Members:

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>STAG members</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Position</b>
Present	Linda Dorn (for Terrie Mitchell)	Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District	Large POTWs	Primary
	VACANT		Large POTWs	Alternate
Present & (P)	Debbie Webster	Central Valley Clean Water Ass.	Small POTWs	Primary
	VACANT		Small POTWs	Alternate
	Dalia Fadl	City of Sacramento	MS4	Primary
	Kyle Ericson	City of Sacramento	MS4	Alternate
Present	Renee Pinel	Western Plant Health Assoc.	Irrigated Agriculture	Primary
	VACANT			Alternate
	Amrith Gunasekara	CA Dept. Food and Agriculture	Agriculture Agencies	Primary
	Mark Cady	CA Dept. Food and Agriculture	Agriculture Agencies	Alternate
	Kirk Wilbur	California Cattlemen	CAFOs	Primary
	VACANT		CAFOs	Alternate
Present	Lynda Smith	Metropolitan Water District S. CA	Water Supply	Primary
Present (P)	Elaine Archibald	CA Urban Water Agencies	Drinking Water	Primary
	Rachel Pisor	CA Dept. Water Resources	Drinking Water	Alternate
Present (P)	Paul Bedore	Port of Stockton	Waterways	Primary
	Leandro Ramos	CA State Parks – Boating & Waterways	Waterways	Alternate
Present	Stephen Louie	CA Dept. Fish and Wildlife	Resource Mgmt	Primary
	VACANT		Resource Mgmt	Alternate
	Eddie Lucchesi	Mosquito & Vector Control Ass.	Mosquito Abatement	Primary
	David Smith	Mosquito & Vector Control Ass.	Mosquito Abatement	Alternate
	Jon Rosenfield	The Bay Institute	Environmental NGOs	Primary
Present	Andria Ventura	Clean Water Action	Environmental NGOs	Alternate

A blank under Attendance category indicates individual was absent from the meeting

An “A” next to “Present” indicates the STAG member was present as a non-voting alternate

(P) indicates participated remotely via WebEx / phone

### Other Interested Parties:

<b>Other participants</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Steve Camacho	State Water Resources Control Board
Selina Cole	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board – Delta RMP

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Mike Deas	Watercourse Engineering, Inc.
Joe Domagalski	U.S. Geological Survey
Diana Engle (P)	Larry Walker Associates
Stephanie Fong	State and Federal Water Contractors Association
Tom Grovhoug	Larry Walker Associates
Tom Hall	EOA, Inc.
Yumiko Henneberry	Delta Stewardship Council - Delta Science Program
Brian Laurenson (P)	Larry Walker Associates
Anne Lee (P)	G. Fred Lee and Associates
G. Fred Lee (P)	G. Fred Lee and Associates
Tim Mussen	Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
Sujay Ray	Tetra Tech, Inc.
Ted Swift (P)	Department of Water Resources
Lisa Thompson	Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
Phil Trowbridge (P)	San Francisco Estuary Institute
Laura Young (P)	Santa Clara Valley Water District
Others (P)	Several other unidentified participants who attended remotely

(P) indicates participated remotely via Webex / phone