

CALIFORNIA WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL MODELING FORUM

# MINUTES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

For Nov. 18, 2011

(This meeting was held at the new Solano Irrigation District Office in Vacaville.)

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| Decisions         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The annual meeting will be on April 16-18, 2012 in Folsom.</li></ul>  |
| Action Items      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rich - call Steve at the USGS to make sure they will be able to present their groundwater model at the workshop.</li><li>• Marianne and Elaine – Contact the IEP and let them know that we would like to have our annual meeting with them at Lake Natomas Inn in April.</li><li>• Elaine - get the letter out on seeking nominations for the annual awards.</li><li>• George - send an email to the Steering Committee on the California Aquatic Bioassessment Workshop (CABW) held by the SWRCB at UCD, along with how to see the Power Points that were presented.</li></ul> |
| Parking Lot Items | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuation with Strategic Plan</li></ul>  |
| Motions           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A motion was made to meet with the IEP at Lake Natomas Inn in April, with CWEMF meeting on April 16-18, with April 18 being the one day that will be overlapped with IEP.</li></ul>   |

REFERENCES HANDED OUT:

1. Executive Directors Report.
2. CWEMF Strategic Plan: Draft Outline To Initiate Steering Committee Discussion
3. Fred Lee Presentation to CWEMF Steering Committee on GFL Peer Review Experience

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1. **INTRODUCTIONS/DESIGNATION OF QUORUM** – The meeting was opened with six persons in attendance, four persons on the phone, and three proxies. A quorum was declared.

2. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT** –Input from the Executive Director’s Report are added to the related items below.

3. **SECRETARY’S REPORT** –Passed unanimously.

4. **TREASURER’S REPORT** –

a. Current Funds - There is now \$55,100 in the general fund, and \$18,300 in the peer review fund, for a total of \$73,400. Since July 1, 2011, \$9800 has been taken in, and \$7000 given out, for a net gain of \$2800 (in the black!). We are still collecting \$2500 from MWD and \$2500 from USBR, so we still have \$5000 coming in.

b. Our finance subcommittee has decided to make our workshops revenue-neutral to the extent possible. It would be helpful to streamline on who pays their annual and workshop dues.

**5. GROUNDWATER PEER REVIEW** - The Peer Review will be a comparative review of the pros and cons of the three groundwater models currently being used in the San Joaquin Valley. The Peer Review subcommittee prepared a list of questions that it would like the potential peer reviewers to cover, and this list was sent out to four potential reviewers to determine their interest and availability. Positive responses were received from three of these persons. No response was received from Carl Hague. The subcommittee will be recommending two of these persons to the Steering Committee soon. Rich read off the requirements to be used in the selection.

The USBR wants to be sure that the review covers the types of groundwater questions and concerns that the public and decision makers have and addresses policy issues, and not just be a technical comparison. The current financial arrangements are \$20,000 in cash to be equally split between the two peer reviewers, and \$20,000 of in-kind labor to be furnished by CWEMF. A discussion ensued as to the adequacy of the \$20,000 in cash, and whether the CWEMF should add any additional cash, but this question was not resolved at this time. The opinion of most present was to let it stand for now. The subcommittee will consider this item at their next conference call on Nov. 29, and get back to the Steering Committee by email with their recommendation.

The subcommittee was asked to present their recommendation of the two reviewers to the Steering Committee on Jan. 20, 2012. The first workshop, where the three models will be presented by their developers or proponents, is to be scheduled for the first quarter of 2012. Rich will call Steve at the USGS to make sure they will be able to present their model at the workshop. Fred Lee mentioned the water quality concerns in the Arvin area that a groundwater model should be capable of addressing.

#### **6. ANNUAL MEETING –**

a. **Asilomar Out** – A letter had been sent to Asilomar asking for their capabilities to handle a smaller group this year, and Asilomar responded that our smaller group would not be financially viable for them.

b. **Alternate Site Options** – Two hotels downtown were checked. UCD and Lake Natomas Inn were checked. UCD could accommodate our group, but they were twice as expensive as the Lake Natomas Inn. A question arose as to whether UCD could give us a discount if we went through one of their departments with a request. It was indicated this was not possible. A good aspect of Lake Natomas Inn is that they do not require us to get a block of rooms, and the rooms which are reserved are less expensive than those at Asilomar. Lake Natomas said we can give them our budget and they will accommodate us around that budget. It was mentioned that the State's travel restrictions have been removed, and DWR will be attending the meeting.

c. **Question of Meeting With IEP** - The IEP will be doing their annual meeting at Lake Natomas in April. They have their funding for this conference. The question arose as to whether we should do our annual meeting at the normal time in February, or meet in April with IEP.

Discussions between the CWEMF Executive Director and Anka of IEP suggest that a joint meeting would be beneficial to both groups. Anka stated that IEP has an increased interest in modeling. A motion was made to meet with the IEP at Lake Natomas Inn in April, with CWEMF meeting on April 16-18, with April 18 being the one day that will be overlapped with IEP. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Marianne and Elaine will contact the IEP.

**d. Annual Meeting Sessions –**

(1) **Joint Session** - The question arose as to what should the joint overlap meeting on April 18 cover? This is still to be determined. It was felt that IEP would like fishery models, such as the EDT model for Pacific Northwest fisheries. Peter Vorster would like to do another San Joaquin River restoration session (fish, riparian habitat, groundwater). Peter would like to know if such a session would be on the joint April 18 day, because if so he would slant the session toward fishery, and include an IEP person as a co-moderator of the session.

(2) **Keynote Speaker** - Bob Karl was suggested previously as a keynote speaker, but he is not with the Sac Bee anymore. He is with the Westlands Water District.

(3) **Session Moderators** - Should we use the web to get session volunteers? Should we post a note on our CWEMF web site asking for session volunteers? The purpose here is to give all CWEMF members an equal chance to sponsor a session. (There have been a few complaints in the past.)

(4) **Suggested Sessions** – Ben has speakers lined up for a multi-dimensional (2-D and 3-D) modeling session. Ben has talked to Dave Perky of SFEI on this. (Or should this topic be a workshop for another time?) The Delta Stewardship Council is having a panel workshop on stressors in the Delta. Would this be a good topic for our meeting? Have the core sessions such as DSM-2, Calsim, climate change. The WEAP model is proprietary: can we have training on the WEAP model, as long as it does not get commercial?

(5) **Annual Awards** – Elaine will get the letter out on seeking nominations for the annual awards. The same forms and format from last year will be used.

**7. TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS –**

a. The half-day workshops (briefings) have gone well. Flood modeling may be a good topic for the third “briefing” (the first two being held in October and November of 20110).

b. George is to send an email to the Steering Committee on the California Aquatic Bioassessment Workshop (CABW) held by the SWRCB at UCD, along with how to see the Power Points that were presented.

c. Can the Delta Stewardship Council join CWEMF? They need to see what we are doing.

**8. ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP FOR NGOs** – While the NGOs were interested, the annual dues of \$500 were too much for them at this time.

**9. EXPERIENCE WITH PEER REVIEWS** – (Author’s note: I recommend that we review Fred’s handout before all future peer reviews, especially pages 2 and 3.)

a. Fred Lee told of his experiences with past peer reviews, and the approaches to peer reviews used by some agencies. He has written reports that have been peer reviewed, and has done peer reviews of others reports.

b. Selecting unbiased external reviewers with expertise in the topic is key. Also it is important to have as many reviewers covering as many disciplines as is economical and practical.

c. How some State and Federal agencies handle peer reviews for their projects:

- The DFG has a contract with UCD to organize peer reviews of their projects (Legislature requirement).
- The SWRCB has a contract with UCB to organize peer reviews of their projects (Legislature requirement).
- The U.S. EPA has a contract with Eastern Research Group (ERG) to organize peer reviews of their projects. (When many similar projects are grouped together for review and there is not adequate funding to review all of the projects, the peer reviewers themselves select which projects to review by secret ballot, where projects are given a high, medium, or low rating.)

d. When considering people to serve as peer reviewers, ask them to submit a statement of interest and their qualifications.

e. The goals of the peer review must be clearly stated to the peer reviewers. The agency setting up the peer review must state what types of experts they are seeking, and what the reviewers will be asked to do.

**10. MODEL USER GROUPS** – The last DSM-2 meeting was well attended.

**11. CWEMF STRATEGIC PLAN** – An outline of the existing strategic plan was presented today, along with a list of current activities and future goals. This was done mainly to facilitate discussion, as some changes to the existing plan may be needed. Some questions are (1) is our mission still valid? (2) are we still striving for consensus? (3) should we add more activities to accomplish? (4) what should we do to strengthen our financial base? (5) How can we increase our value to more people? More will be discussed on this at future meetings.

**12. OTHER BUSINESS** – Next meeting is Jan. 20, 2012. Adjourn 12 noon.

Respectfully Submitted  
George Nichol, Secretary, CWEMF

ATTENDANCE

Marianne Guerin  
Elaine Archibald

Convener  
Executive Director

RMA  
CWEMF

Stacy Tanaka  
George Nichol  
G. Fred Lee  
Rich Satkowski

Treasurer  
Secretary

Watercourse Engr. Inc.  
Public Member  
G. Fred Lee & Assoc.  
Public Member

On Phone: Peter Vorster, Hubert Morel Seytoux, Jobaid Kabir, Ben Bray

Proxies: Paul Hutton, Mike Deas, Jay Lund