

CREST
**Cleaner Rivers through Effective Stakeholder
TMDLs**
**Joint Steering Committee (No. 12) and Technical
Committee (No. 13) Meeting**
November 29, 2005
Minutes
DRAFT

Attendees: Bob Wu (Caltrans)
Daniel Wall (City of Burbank)
Dave Jones (Consulting Team)
Dave Parkinson (Consulting Team)
Don Schroeder (Consulting Team)
Donna Toy-Chen (City of Los Angeles)
Frank Wu (Los Angeles County)
Gerry Greene (City of Downey)
Ginachi Amah (Regional Board)
Kristen James (Heal the Bay)
Lisa Carlson (City of Los Angeles)
Melinda Becker (Regional Board)
Michael Lyons (Regional Board)
Michele Pla (Consulting Team)
Penny Weiland (City of Los Angeles)
Sal Ramirez (Tecs Env)
Sonia Flores (City of Calabasas)
Sheila Brice (City of Los Angeles)
Suzanne Dallman (LA/SG Watershed Council)
Terry Fleming (EPA)
Zora Bahariance (City of Los Angeles)

Deleted: (listed alphabetically)

Copies: CREST Technical Committee members and Steering Committee members

On Tuesday, November 29, 2005, the thirteenth CREST Technical Committee meeting combined with the twelfth Steering Committee meeting was held at 2714 Media Center Drive, Dodgers Conference Room.

Purpose of the Meeting:

- Update on the Los Angeles River Bacteria TMDL Development
- Review of final Draft of the Technical Memorandum for the Ballona Creek Bacteria TMDL, including the preferred and alternative implementation strategies, estimated costs, compliance monitoring recommendations, schedule and potential special studies to improve understanding of the water resource characteristics and effectiveness of control strategies.

I. Introductions/Meeting Objectives

Michele Pla welcomed attendees to the joint CREST Steering and Technical Committee meeting. Following self-introductions, the minutes from the October 25 meeting were approved with some revisions on the attendance list.

II. Status of the Los Angeles River Bacteria TMDL Development

Dave Jones gave a general status report of the LA River Bacteria TMDL development project. The following were the highlights:

- **Monitoring Program**
The monitoring is scheduled to start at the onset of the summer season on April 1, 2006.
- **Data Inventory and Compilation**
The data request letter (previously emailed to CREST members) was also distributed at the meeting. The letter contains information on the type data specifically requested, as well as information on data that consultants already have. The data will be compiled into a GIS framework for summarizing and presentation. Available data is being verified for accuracy and precision. The format of the data will be standardized according to the SWAMP program (see below) data for improved future data exchange and compatibility (Terry Fleming to discuss matter with Dustin Bambic).
- **Preliminary Draft in March 2006**
The revised schedule distributed via email and at the meeting provides for fast track delivery of a preliminary draft document of the Los Angeles River Bacteria TMDL in March 2006.

III. Introduction to the SWAMP program - by LARWQCB SWAMP coordinator

Michael Lyons

The Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) was established and mandated by the State to integrate and coordinate existing water quality monitoring programs. The State and Regional Water Boards receive \$200K-\$250K each per year to implement the program, including performing additional monitoring.

SWAMP is currently organizing monitoring programs for the San Gabriel River Watershed. The goal of the program is to coordinate and standardize monitoring efforts including for NPDES and TMDL-) into a concerted and integrated effort for all phases of monitoring, starting from development to implementation of a monitoring program.

Michael Lyons is with the Regional Board NPDES group. He would be able to integrate TMDL compliance monitoring with other required Los Angeles River monitoring efforts for permits (subject to Regional Board Executives' approval) in order to improve cost-effectiveness. SWAMP has already performed some monitoring in the Los Angeles River last summer. He also indicated that the discharge permits for some permittees such as the City of Burbank, City of Glendale and the Tapia/ Los Virgenes will likely contain a requirement for watershed monitoring program. In the past, most of the SWAMP monitoring efforts involve bioassessment, water column toxicity, and bioaccumulation but SWAMP can also get involved in bacteria monitoring. It was suggested that the format for LA River database should be similar/ compatible with SWAMP. Dave Jones indicated that Dustin Bambic, lead person for LA River data collection, will get in contact with Michael Lyons to discuss this issue and ensure data reporting formats are compatible.

Gerry Greene passed around copies of the list of BMPs being implemented by various cites. The list is included in the current MS4 Annual Report.

IV. Review of Draft Technical Memo for the Ballona Creek Bacterial TMDL

Michele Pla summarized CREST's 2005 actions for the Ballona Creek Bacteria TMDL starting from Ginachi Amah's briefing in February, gathering of information from April (similar to current events for the LA River Bacteria), and leading to the current Technical Memo recommendations. She thanked everyone for their participation and comments, and requested finalization of comments on the substance of the Technical Memo, since this is last meeting for this calendar year. She mentioned that the consulting team is re-formatting parts of the document and clarifying the distinctions on the implementation options. She also mentioned that Terry and Ginachi provided some comments, including clarifying differences between the preferred strategy and the alternative strategy, and these comments would be incorporated in the next draft. Members are to provide substantive comments by **December 9**.

Don Schroeder made a Power Presentation on the Technical Memo. He reviewed the implementation strategies, schedule, cost estimates, and the monitoring program.

▪ **Implementation Strategies**

Don discussed the differences between the two strategies. The two strategies are intended to be two possible bookends of an eventual outcome in terms of assurance, cost, and meeting water quality standards. In summary, the Preferred Strategy's primary emphasis is on local/ watershed based and integrated solutions whereas the "Alternative Strategy 's'" primary emphasis is on dry weather flow diversions, wet weather flow interception, temporary discharge, and disinfection. Based on discussion from previous meetings, the preferred strategy encourages reuse, addresses multiple pollutants and restoration. Members were reminded that. The "preferred strategy" as described in the Technical Memo) which has as its primary emphasis on local/ watershed based and integrated solutions includes comprehensive watershed is the preferred strategy as it

presents more value over the second option (or the “alternative strategy” of the Technical Memo) in previous CREST meetings.

It was discussed that actual BMPs will be dependent on the iterative approach and will require interim evaluations to assess the effectiveness/success of the BMPs. Hence, it was noted that the iterative approach should be emphasized in the final Technical Memo. Levels of reasonable assurance of compliance were also discussed, with the alternative strategy providing the most assurance. It was requested that a more detailed description of the Northern Outfall Treatment Facility or NOTF be included in the final Technical Memo.

Don showed a table of details of the two strategies (p.4 of presentation). Various issues were discussed including adding reclamation benefits, crediting agencies for recent work already performed, infiltration of small storms, and storing part of wet weather using cisterns which are considered the building blocks of the preferred strategy. There were some discussions on how using sand filters /neighborhood recharge might affect the ground water quality in terms of pollutants such as bacteria and metals. Some indicated that some BMPs should not have adverse effects. Bacteria generally won't get into ground water. Metals are also unlikely to contaminate ground water. However, other compounds in stormwater, such as salts, are possible contaminants. The Committee noted that detailed discussion of each BMP option could take place after TMDL adoption, when the stakeholders develop implementation workplans.

Other comments include:

1) For the Preferred Strategy

- More description of the NOTF (particularly its capacity during dry and wet weather, and other permitting and feasibility issues, especially if flow is to be taken from creek)
- Note that water reuse of 4 cfs, as mentioned in the dry weather option, is referenced from City of LA IRP Report
- Feasibility of treatment at NOTF, particularly if flow is taken out from creek – it was noted that at least 3 locations would be needed for treatment
- Add an iterative approach to achieve reasonable assurance toward compliance
- Include a statement that some of the options in the preferred strategy are already being implemented in some areas of the watershed

For the Alternative Strategy, expand or include language that will say that if wastewater is treated, there is that option of reuse, and reuse of wastewater will not be prevented.

▪ **Schedule and Compliance**

A comprehensive TMDL compliance schedule was presented. It was noted that the chronology was based on the BC Metals and the SMBBB TMDLs. However, stakeholders questioned the applicability of the schedule for the BC Bacteria TMDL. In particular, compliance dates for summer dry weather in parallel with special studies was

questioned. Also, it was noted that the BC watershed based strategies would be more comprehensive and require more time than SMBBB.

It was expressed that the SMBBB TMDL benefited from pre-TMDL implementation investigations, evaluations, and BMP construction. Furthermore, the complicated nature of the BC watershed compared to the SMB watershed was emphasized because: 1. BC cannot only have an end-of-pipe solution as in the SMBBB TMDL; 2. It may be infeasible to leave the creek section completely dry at any location; 3. BC jurisdictions contamination effects are “in series” rather than “in parallel” compared to the SMBBB, therefore complicating source identifications, allocations, and responsibilities. Some stakeholders noted that the actual compliance might be reached in less than the specified four years. Overall, it was agreed that some BMPs, especially those with the easiest solutions to remove contaminants, or the ‘low hanging fruit’ should be in place before an interim prescribed compliance phase, even if the required percent compliance could not be met.

There were discussions on revising the schedule for developing the draft and final implementation workplan, revising the TMDL, and completing special studies, it was noted that the schedule need to be revised based on what would make sense or would be efficient. (I.e. adequate amount of time needed for the processes or tasks, and more efficient sequence of tasks).

Others noted that the plan should be explicit about addressing the easily removed contaminants or “low hanging fruit” in the first 4-6 years after TMDL adoption.

Other comments regarding compliance include:

- Include for steps for dry weather compliance in estuary and Reach 1 and 2 across the watershed.
- Include regulatory steps for compliance.

▪ **Cost Estimates**

A table of cost estimates for the various implementation strategies was presented. Several stakeholders requested further time to review the specified costs.

▪ **Monitoring Program**

Don provided a review of the monitoring approach that was drafted based on the monitoring subcommittee recommendations and noted the Regional Board’s memo on monitoring recommendations, which was not included because of time limitations.

The issue of defining the monitoring was discussed. Specifically, what is the monitoring objective? It was recommended that two types of monitoring be required, regardless of the terms used to describe them. The first monitoring would be to determine compliance and include the impaired water bodies, and should be moved to the implementation section along with the iterative approach description. The second type of monitoring

would be to investigate and determine where and which BMPs to implement, and could be included in the special studies recommendations section. Several stakeholders asserted that the details could be worked out in the post-TMDL monitoring plan development phase.

- **Special Studies**

In general, special studies are to be divided into three categories: 1) studies to determine if TMDL needs to be revisited (2) studies of the effectiveness of TMDL (3) studies of the unintended impacts of BMP. Other special studies to be included in the Tech Memo include study to assess the minimum freshwater flow needed in the estuary to protect beneficial uses and source ID.

Final Comments

The applicability of the two bookend implementation strategies was discussed. Stakeholders requested some type of assurance and language that implementing the recommended BMPs and strategy will “get us there”.

Everyone’s email feedback on the Technical Memo was requested. Stakeholders requested to **provide substantive comments by December 9, 2005**. A revamped version of the Memo will be emailed to CREST members by mid-December.

Next Meeting

January, (Fourth Tuesday is the 24th) 2006.