

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

Staff: Shin-Roei Lee
Meeting Date: June 14, 2006

SUBJECT: Stormwater Subcommittee Workshop

DISCUSSION: At this workshop, the Stormwater Subcommittee of the Board encourages informal comments and discussion on the general concept of urban water quality management and how it relates to specific Board initiatives, such as our pending municipal regional stormwater permit, the ongoing development of a stream and wetland systems protection policy, and the implementation of TMDLs.

The Subcommittee's objective in hosting this workshop is to initiate discussion on a long term vision for urban water quality management, rather than to work out the details of specific regulatory initiatives. This is the first in a likely series of workshops or meetings on this topic. Discussion can include broad principles or specific suggestions for the Board and its staff to consider as it implements its regulatory programs. Discussion can range from suggested governmental organization to specific physical structures to be included in the landscape that protect or restore water quality. It can include recommended actions to be taken directly by the Board or actions that are better done by others, with the Board encouragement or support.

One example of a long term vision is local implementation of the Ahwahnee Water Principles (http://www.lgc.org/ahwahnee/h2o_principles.html) for management of water resources in an urban setting that addresses water supply, flood protection, water quality, wildlife habitat, and recreation to accommodate existing and future development needs. Some cities, counties, and organizations in this Region have adopted the Principles, including Marin County, Marin Municipal Water District, Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Petaluma, Morgan Hill, the Bay Area Water Forum, the Association of Bay Area Governments (CalFed Task Force), and the League of California Cities. The Principles are summarized in Attachment 1.

The Subcommittee would like to hear comments from workshop participants about how to effectively and efficiently implement the Principles or similar approaches, what the implementation obstacles might be, and how such approaches can be best applied to or coordinated with the Board's regulatory initiatives.

The workshop will start at 2:00 p.m., after adjournment of the Board Meeting on June 14. The workshop will be informal; however, to ensure everyone gets a chance to speak, we may need to limit each speaker's initial presentation to 3 to 5 minutes. Written comments and reference material will be accepted, and the workshop will be recorded.

Attachment 1

The Ahwahnee Water Principles consist of the following Community and Implementation Principles:

Community Principles

1. Community design should be compact, mixed use, walkable and transit-oriented.
2. Natural resources such as wetlands, flood plains, recharge zones, riparian areas, open space, and native habitats should be identified, preserved and restored.
3. Water holding areas such as creek beds, recessed athletic fields, ponds, cisterns, and other features should be incorporated into the urban landscape.
4. All aspects of landscaping from the selection of plants to soil preparation and the installation of irrigation systems should be designed to reduce water demand, retain runoff, decrease flooding, and recharge groundwater.
5. Permeable surfaces should be used for hardscape. Impervious surfaces such as driveways, streets, and parking lots should be minimized.
6. Dual plumbing that allows graywater from showers, sinks and washers to be reused for landscape irrigation should be included in the infrastructure of new development.
7. Community design should maximize the use of recycled water.
8. Urban water conservation technologies should be incorporated in all new construction and retrofitted in remodeled buildings.
9. Ground water treatment and brackish water desalination should be pursued when necessary to maximize locally available, drought-proof water supplies.

Implementation Principles

1. Water supply agencies should be consulted early in the land use decision-making process regarding technology, demographics and growth projections.
2. City and county officials, the watershed council, LAFCO, special districts and other stakeholders sharing watersheds should collaborate to take advantage of the benefits and synergies of water resource planning at a watershed level.
3. The best, multi-benefit and integrated strategies and projects should be identified and implemented before less integrated proposals, unless urgency demands otherwise.
4. From start to finish, projects and programs should involve the public, build relationships, and increase the sharing of and access to information.
5. Plans, programs, projects and policies should be monitored and evaluated to determine if the expected results are achieved and to improve future practices.