

**Minutes of the
ASBS Natural Water Quality Committee**
March 19, 2008
at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Members in attendance:

Andrew Dickson - Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Rich Gossett - CRG Marine Laboratories
Dominic Gregorio - State Water Resources Control Board
Burt Jones - University of Southern California
Steve Murray - California State University Fullerton
Bruce Posthumus - San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Kenneth Schiff - Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

Members absent:

none

Others in attendance:

Gary Garafalo - Caltrans
Julie Hampel - UC San Diego /Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Kimberly O'Connell - UC San Diego /Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Peter vonLangen - Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Dominic Gregorio began the meeting at 11:05 AM. There were six items on the day's agenda: 1) Approve December 2007 minutes; 2) Update on ASBS regulatory progress and assessment of application monitoring data; 3) Finalize the recommendation to the SWRCB regarding guidelines for improved monitoring for DFA grant projects (based on teleconferences on Feb. 27 & 28, 2008); 4) Discuss and refine the natural water quality definition; 5) Annual Report approval and review of the presentation to the SWRCB; 6) A progress report on the winter '08 pilot monitoring and Regional Monitoring design (including intertidal biology) for ASBS; 7) Set meeting schedule for the remainder of 2008. Item 3 was moved to follow item 6.

The minutes from Dec 7, 2007 were reviewed and, with minor edits, were approved by the Committee.

Dominic opened the second agenda item on ASBS regulatory updates. Twenty-seven ASBS Exception applications are now at the SWRCB. Most were delivered in 2006, but the rest arrived over the last quarter. There was a large range in monitoring data quality for the different applications. A draft data report has been written by SWRCB staff summarizing the monitoring information from the applications that included: 1) physical, hydrological, and meteorological data; 2) BMPs performance data; 3) discharge and receiving water chemistry; 4) discharge and receiving water toxicity; 5) bioaccumulation

in the receiving water; and 6) biological communities in the receiving water. The goal is to finish this draft document in time for the SWRCB meeting on April 1. Finally, SIO had submitted their letter for monitoring modifications to the RWQCB in February and they are currently waiting on a response.

Dominic opened the fourth agenda item on creating a definition of natural water quality. Andrew and Ken had edited the version discussed at the previous meeting and, after describing the changes, opened up further discussion on the new draft. The Committee generally liked the modifications and added some additional wording changes. Bruce motioned to adopt the definition with the provision that changes could be made in the future. Rich seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor of adoption. The action item from this topic was:

- Ken should provide this definition at the NWQC presentation at the SWRCB meeting on April 1.

Dominic opened the fifth agenda item on review of the Annual Report and presentation to the SWRCB. Ken edited the document based on the NWQC comments from the previous meeting. He also presented a draft PowerPoint presentation. Many editorial suggestions were provided that improved the presentation. Some discussion on the accuracy of the conclusions regarding the permit exceedences was discussed. The document was provisionally approved with the following action items:

- Ken is to add a slide elaborating on the natural water quality definition adopted earlier in the meeting
- Dominic and Rich will confirm the exceedence of specific constituents as described in the Annual Report. An inclusion of the time period of evaluation should also be provided.

Ken opened the sixth agenda item on the ASBS Regional Monitoring design and pilot study. A monitoring design and draft workplan was presented at the last meeting. The primary progress since the last meeting was implementing the reference site selection based on the stakeholder derived criteria. Some of these sites were used in the pilot study currently underway. A total of 8 sites were being sampled; 2 from northern CA, 2 from Central CA, 2 from southern CA, and 2 from the Channel Islands. Thus far, most sites had been sampled, but some of the southern CA sites had yet to flow following storm events. The next step in the process of establishing the Regional Monitoring design was to provide recommendations for biological monitoring. The stakeholder group had prioritized rocky intertidal habitats for monitoring. Ken was meeting with the Multi-Agency Rocky Intertidal Network (MARINe) for their input on integration with their large-scale monitoring design. The action item from this topic was:

- Ken is to provide an update on progress at the next meeting

The third agenda item was to create a NWQC recommendation to the SWRCB regarding guidelines for improved monitoring of Proposition 84 (ASBS) grant projects. Dominic had facilitated two teleconferences of NWQC members on Feb. 27 & 28, 2008. His summary of the teleconferences included the following observations: 1) thus far, nearly all grant programs were incapable of assessing the success/failure of their program for

either removal of pollutants or improvements to receiving waters; 2) the inability to assess success was a function of insufficient time and guidance to the grantees, an unfocused emphasis on the monitoring components, a large range of capabilities and goals of each individual grantee; and 3) the Prop 84 Task Force was willing to listen to recommendations from the NWQC on monitoring requirements. The NWQC discussed several important elements to enhance the Prop 84 grant program monitoring components. These elements included: 1) a cohesive, question-driven monitoring program; 2) a centralized monitoring design that ensured comparability in sampling, data analysis, and information management; and 3) a person or group responsible for coordinating, collating, assessing and reporting on the Prop 84 monitoring effort. The action item for this topic included:

- Ken was to provide an informal update on the NWQC recommendation to the Prop 84 Task Force
- Ken was to draft a written formal recommendation and distribute to the NWQC to review

The 2008 NWQC meetings will be held on June 5 and September 4 at SCCWRP and November 21 at SIO.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 PM.