

California's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Realignment San Diego Advisory Committee Meeting 3 Notes

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

Attendees

Advisory Committee Members in attendance:

- Jill Sherman-Warne, Native American Environmental Protection Coalition (NAEPC)
- Lisa Cumper, Jamul Indian Village
- Cristina Torres, Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians
- Arash Afghahi, Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians
- Ray Hiemstra, Orange County Coastkeeper
- Mitchell (Mitch) McKay, Citizens for Coastal Conservancy
- Amy Smith, California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- Matt Lucero, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- Wesley (Wes) Smith, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
- Peter Vroom, California Water Quality Monitoring Council & City of San Diego's Public Utilities Department
- Jay Davis, California Water Quality Monitoring Council Safe to Eat Workgroup & San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI)

Advisory Committee members not in attendance:

- The Honorable Frederick (Bo) Mazzetti, Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians & Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association (SCTCA)
- Shasta Gaughen, Pala Band of Mission Indians
- Heidi Brow, Pala Band of Mission Indians
- Sherri Norris, California Indian Environmental Alliance's (CIEA)
- Kelcey Stricker, Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians
- José Bravo, Just Transition Alliance
- Matt O'Malley, San Diego Coast Keeper
- Kirsten Winter, US Forest Service (USFS)
- Autumn Bonnema, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML)

Realignment Team in attendance:

- Chad Loflen, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (R9)
- Ali Dunn, Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP)
- Anna Holder, SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program Realignment Lead
- Michelle Tang, SWAMP

- Gabriella Moran, SWAMP
- Lisa Beutler, Stantec

Realignment Team not in attendance:

- David Gibson, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (R9)
- Cynthia Gorham, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (R9)
- Mike Antos, Stantec

Guest attendees:

- Wesley (Wes) Heim, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML)
- Billy Jakl, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML)

Welcome and grounding

- Members of the Realignment Team welcomed all to the second San Diego Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Advisory Committee Members reviewed meeting ground rules: be respectful to one another, be constructive, be engaged, and be respectful of each other's time. No additions or revisions were requested by Advisory Committee Members.
- Acknowledgement that very few Advisory Committee Members representing Tribes and community-based organizations were able to attend the meeting and to keep that in mind when making decisions throughout the meeting.

Advisory Committee Member Introductions

- Advisory Committee Members, Realignment Team, and guests introduced themselves and shared what they most want to see accomplished during the meeting.
- Discussion of desired outcomes and accomplishments for the meeting included Advisory Committee Members' desires to:
 - Build on the momentum from [Meeting 1](#) and [Meeting 2](#)
 - Make progress on meeting objectives (i.e. finalize 2022 Monitoring and Analysis Workplan to enable planning for 2022 sampling and analysis)
 - Set a clear path forward for preparing for 2022 monitoring and Advisory Committee meetings in the San Diego Region

2022 Monitoring and Analysis Workplan & Feedback - Summary & Discussion

Workplan Summary included:

- The Realignment Team presented a refresher on the objectives and overall structure of the 2022 Monitoring and Analysis Workplan (Workplan), and summarized feedback and outstanding questions to be discussed during the meeting.
 - Workplan purpose: to document which species, pollutants, and locations are important for the mission, tradition, culture, and subsistence of San Diego region Tribes and communities to prioritize sampling and analysis efforts in 2022, and to

document additional needs and priorities that should be addressed ASAP, but not necessarily during the 2022 sampling season.

- Workplan structure includes: an introduction, description of current sampling and analysis processes (Statewide SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring section), description of priorities according to Advisory Committee Recommendations (San Diego Region Realignment Sampling section), and details to help sampling crews plan for 2022 (Appendix)
- Feedback was received from just one Advisory Committee Member since it was sent out for review in September.

Outstanding questions, decisions, and next steps discussed by meeting attendees included:

- *Question: Do we want to try and sample stocker trout in Chollas Lake that don't overwinter?*
 - *Question context:* Reservoirs are stocked from hatcheries around the state annually. However stocked fish generally can't survive long enough to accumulate pollutant levels of concern into their tissue and generally do not represent pollutant levels in wild fish from the same water body. Given the limited resources for sampling in 2022 and beyond, the Realignment Team wanted to confirm that stocked trout in Chollas Lake should not be considered for sampling.
 - *Discussion:*
 - Advisory Committee Members generally agreed with the Realignment Team recommendation for Chollas Lake but noted that the recommendation should not be a blanket decision for all water bodies. Any additional lakes with stocked trout should have a separate discussion.
 - Advisory Committee Members were curious as to whether hatcheries test pollutant levels in fish before they are released.
 - *Decision & Action Items:*
 - Realignment Team is to circle back with whomever originally recommended Chollas Lake be sampled and confirm that they also agree with the Realignment Team recommendation to not sample stocked trout in that particular water body.
 - CDFW representative is to check on whether hatchery fish are tested and share that information with the Realignment Team so it can be distributed to all Advisory Committee Members.
- *Question: Do we need a different location for the Dana Point Harbor and Jetty (inside harbor or outside)?*
 - *Question context:* Realignment Team wanted to confirm that current sampling location reflected the intent and needs of whomever recommended Dana Point Harbor and Jetty as a sampling location.
 - *Discussion:*

- Advisory Committee Members noted that the exact location of the sample site matters and wanted to be sure the original recommender has final say on whether an additional sampling location is necessary.
 - *Decision & Action Items:*
 - Realignment Team is to circle back with whomever originally recommended Dana Point Harbor and Jetty be sampled and confirm whether they think a different sampling location is needed.
- *Question: Should we continue to prioritize Pine Valley Creek for 2022 sampling?*
 - *Question context:* Pine Valley Creek is mostly intermittent except for one perennial stretch with stickleback. Given the limited resources for sampling in 2022 and beyond, the Realignment Team wanted to confirm whether the intermittent section of Pine Valley Creek should be prioritized for sampling.
 - *Discussion:*
 - CDFW representative noted that a colleague does fish surveys in Pine Valley Creek and noted that they would like to check in with them to get more information to share with the group before a decision is made.
 - Advisory Committee Members requested a Native Monitor be present when sampling near creeks so they can ensure sampling is sensitive to cultural resources.
 - *Decision & Action Items:*
 - CDFW representative is to check in with colleague who conducts fish surveys in Pine Valley Creek, obtain more background information (e.g. which sections are intermittent, which fish tend to be present, if there are enough fish to sample) and share that information with the Realignment Team so it can be distributed to all Advisory Committee Members.
 - Realignment Team is to circle back with whomever originally recommended Pine Valley Creek be sampled and confirm that the sampling location aligns with their original vision and get their perspective on whether it should be prioritized.
 - Realignment Team is to discuss the logistics of partnering with a Native Monitor so they can be present when sampling near creeks in 2022 and beyond.
- *Question: Should we prioritize sampling in the Tijuana River or in the Tijuana River Estuary?*
 - *Question context:* Tijuana River is mostly intermittent but was indicated as a high priority in past discussions. The Realignment Team wanted to confirm what component of the Tijuana River should be prioritized for sampling, if any: (1) an intermittent section of the Tijuana River, (2) a part of the Tijuana River Estuary, or (3) a coastal location at the mouth of the Tijuana River which would be north of the Tijuana River State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA).

- *Discussion:*
 - Advisory Committee Members discussed other monitoring that is being conducted in the intermittent parts of the river and in the estuary. The Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program also conducted coastal sampling north of the SMCA in 2018.
 - Advisory Committee Members generally agreed that sampling in and around the Tijuana River should not be prioritized at this time given all of the other monitoring that is happening there and noting that other locations (like piers) are of higher priority, but requested the Realignment Team circle back with whomever originally recommended that Tijuana River should be sampled to confirm that they agree with that recommendation.
- *Decision & Action Items:*
 - Realignment Team is to circle back with whomever originally recommended Tijuana River be sampled and confirm that they also agree with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee Members present during the meeting to not prioritize that location for sampling in 2022.
- *Question: Are there any adjustments that should be made to the current prioritization categories?*
 - *Question context:* The Realignment Team wanted to confirm that existing prioritization categories accurately reflect past discussions and Advisory Committee Member priorities.
 - *Discussion:*
 - Advisory Committee Members discussed current prioritizations (see table below) and noted their overall agreement with them, except for those locations discussed in previous questions that have already been identified as in need of follow-up.
 - Advisory Committee Members discussed the concerns around sampling threatened species on the list and that the CDFW collection permit process would likely not allow for take of those species or, if they did, that the take would be very restrictive and closely monitored. Species of particular concern include Arroyo Chub and Rainbow trout.

	High priority for sampling	Would like to be sampled but can be skipped if limited by budget/logistics
Sampling Location	Oceanside Harbor, Dana Point Harbor and Jetty, San Diego River, San Diego Bay, Sweetwater River, Imperial Beach Pier, Tijuana River	Trabuco Creek, San Mateo Creek, San Luis Rey River, Agua Hedionda Lagoon, Pine Valley Creek, Chollas Lake, Otay River
Species already included in monitoring	Largemouth Bass, Spotted Bay/Sand Bass, Perch Species, Topsmelt, Kelp/Sand Bass, Mackerel Species	Catfish Species, Carp, Rockfish Species
New species to be added	Arroyo Chub, Mussels, Oyster, Lobster	Sharks, Rainbow trout, Sunfish species, Bonito, Crayfish

- *Decision & Action Items:*
 - Advisory Committee Members recommended that Arroyo Chub and Rainbow trout be removed to the list of species to be prioritized for sampling in 2022 but indicate their long-term concern about and interest in those species.
 - Realignment Team is to circle back with whomever originally recommended Arroyo Chub and Rainbow trout be sampled and confirm that they also agree with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee Members present during the meeting to not prioritize those species for sampling in 2022.
- *Question: Do we want to add the following pier locations to our list of sample locations? If so, how should they be prioritized?*
 - *Locations under consideration:* Ocean Beach Pier, Pacific Beach Pier, Oceanside Pier, San Clemente Pier, Mission Bay Jetties, Batiquitos Lagoon, Agua Hedionda Effluent Channel
 - *Question context:* Piers, jetties, and other locations that do not require a license to fish were identified as important fishing locations for subsistence anglers. The Dana Point Harbor and Jetty and Imperial Beach Pier were highlighted in past discussions as being high priority for sampling in 2022. The Realignment Team wanted to circle to the above list of locations to see if any of them should also be prioritized for sampling in 2022.
 - *Discussion:*

- Advisory Committee Members discussed additional locations and noted that all locations are likely used for fishing, however they were less sure of the popularity or frequency of use for each specific location.
 - Advisory Committee Members requested confirmation that none of those locations required a license to fish and recommended that any location that requires a license should be a lower priority than others.
 - *Decision & Action Items:*
 - Advisory Committee Members recommended that Oceanside Pier and Mission Bay Jetties be added to the “High priority for sampling in 2022” list of sampling locations, and that all other locations be added to the “Would like to be sampled but can be skipped if limited by budget/logistics” list.
 - CDFW representative is to check the licensing requirements for listed locations and share that information with the Realignment Team so it can be distributed to all Advisory Committee Members.
- *Question: Are there specific locations or species you would like to be analyzed for algal toxins?*
 - *Question context:* Toxins associated with algal blooms were identified as being of interest and concern for Advisory Committee Members during past discussions. The Realignment Team circled back with the SWAMP Freshwater Harmful Algal Bloom (FHAB) Program Team to get their perspective and recommendations on sampling. The FHAB Team noted that they have convened a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to develop a standardized process for sampling FHABs in tissue, but that their recommendations would not be available until later in 2022. The FHAB Program Team recommended: (1) we do NOT sample or analyze fish tissue for FHABs until *after* the FHAB TAC publishes their recommended process, (2) we do conduct some exploratory water sampling and analysis to get a better idea of what toxins are present in water bodies so that when the FHAB TAC publishes their recommendations the San Diego Region will be better prepared to begin sampling of tissue for FHABs.
 - *Discussion:*
 - Advisory Committee Members did not discuss the question in detail and recommended we circle back to this item at a future meeting.
 - *Decision & Action Items:*
 - Realignment Team is to circle back with the FHAB Team and OEHHA to include their FHAB-specific recommendations in the Workplan and to prioritize exploratory sampling and analysis of FHABs in water samples over sampling and analysis of FHABs in fish tissue in 2022.
- *Question: What additional revisions/additions does OEHHA think would be beneficial to include and prioritize in this Workplan?*

- *Question context:* A specific request for OEHHA to add recommendations to the Workplan was sent out after the deadline for the rest of the Advisory Committee Members to submit their feedback. The Realignment Team wanted to be transparent about this request and give OEHHA representatives a chance to discuss their recommendations with the rest of the Advisory Committee.
- *Discussion:*
 - OEHHA representatives noted that they would likely recommend the inclusion of PCB analyses for some coastal locations and species and noted that more time would be needed for a thorough review of freshwater locations and species.
- *Decision & Action Items:*
 - OEHHA representatives are to review the Workplan and include their specific recommendations as soon as possible - no later than Dec. 1, 2021.

Planning for 2022 Advisory Committee Meetings

- The Realignment Team presented a refresher on what the focus of 2022 meetings would be and the need to begin thinking about when and where we would like to meet (if in-person meetings are an option).
 - 2022 Meetings (Meeting 4 and Meeting 5) will be focused on discussions around communication needs in the region:
 - How might the Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program produce open and accessible data and share information gained from monitoring efforts?
 - How might Tribes and communities most want to hear about the findings of the work?
 - The Realignment Team recommended that the first meeting be held before the end of the fiscal year, sometime between March and June 2022.
- Advisory Committee Members briefly discussed options but felt the conversation should move offline so that Advisory Committee Members not present during the meeting could contribute.
- *Decision & Action Items:*
 - The Realignment Team is to circle back with Advisory Committee Members with a way to collect meeting time and location preferences for the next meeting in early 2022.
 - Advisory Committee Members are to respond to requests regarding coordinating for 2022 meeting locations and logistics.

Reflections & 2021 Process Debrief

- The Realignment Team noted that this has been the first time they have led a realignment process like this, and that they would like to replicate the process in all other regions in California. The Realignment Team asked for Advisory Committee Members to

reflect on how the process has been thus far and provide any recommendations on how to improve it going forward (for 2022 San Diego Advisory Meetings and for future efforts in other regions).

- Advisory Committee Members briefly discussed their reflections but felt the conversation should move offline so that Advisory Committee Members not present during the meeting could contribute.
- *Decision & Action Items:*
 - The Realignment Team is to circle back with Advisory Committee Members with a way to collect reflections and recommendations.
 - Advisory Committee Members are to respond to requests regarding reflections on the 2021 process and recommendations for future improvements.
 - The Realignment Team is to write up a summary of Advisory Committee Member reflections and recommendations.

Next Steps & Review Action Items

Realignment Team Action Items:

- Write up meeting 3 notes, share notes and slides with Advisory Committee for review and feedback
- Circle back with whomever originally recommended Chollas Lake be sampled and confirm that they also agree with the Realignment Team recommendation to not sample stocked trout in that particular water body.
- Circle back with whomever originally recommended Dana Point Harbor and Jetty be sampled and confirm whether they think a different sampling location is needed.
- Circle back with whomever originally recommended Pine Valley Creek be sampled and confirm that the sampling location aligns with their original vision and get their perspective on whether it should be prioritized.
- Discuss the logistics of partnering with a Native Monitor so they can be present when sampling near creeks in 2022 and beyond.
- Circle back with whomever originally recommended Tijuana River be sampled and confirm that they agree with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee Members present during the meeting to not prioritize that location for sampling in 2022.
- Circle back with whomever originally recommended Arroyo Chub and Rainbow trout be sampled and confirm that they agree with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee Members present during the meeting to not prioritize those species for sampling in 2022.
- Circle back with the FHAB Team and OEHHA to include their FHAB-specific recommendations in the Workplan and to prioritize exploratory sampling and analysis of FHABs in water samples over sampling and analysis of FHABs in fish tissue in 2022.
- Finalize 2022 Monitoring and Analysis Workplan
- Post finalized notes and Workplan on the [Realignment Page - Products Section](#)
- Circle back with Advisory Committee Members with a way to collect meeting time and location preferences for the next meeting in early 2022.

- Begin coordinating 2022 meeting locations and logistics
- Circle back with Advisory Committee Members with a way to collect reflections and recommendations.
- Write up a summary of Advisory Committee Member reflections and recommendations.
- Present on progress to [Safe to Eat Workgroup](#) (Next meetings on Jan 26th, Apr 27th)
- Present on progress to [California Water Quality Monitoring Council](#) (Next meetings TBD)

Advisory Committee Member Action Items:

- Review meeting 3 notes, provide feedback/corrections
- CDFW representative is to check on whether hatchery fish are tested and share that information with the Realignment Team so it can be distributed to all Advisory Committee Members.
- CDFW representative is to check in with colleague who conducts fish surveys in Pine Valley Creek, obtain more background information (e.g. which sections are intermittent, which fish tend to be present, if there are enough fish to sample) and share that information with the Realignment Team so it can be distributed to all Advisory Committee Members.
- OEHHA representatives are to review the Workplan and include their specific recommendations as soon as possible - no later than Dec. 1, 2021.
- Respond to requests regarding coordinating for 2022 meeting locations and logistics.
- Respond to requests regarding reflections on the 2021 process and recommendations for future improvements.