California Water Data Consortium

California Water Data Consortium
Steering Committee Meeting Notes
April 9, 2021

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Goals
- Welcome everyone!
- Discuss and approve Steering Committee governance documents
- Update and discuss pilot projects
- Evaluate Steering Committee meeting effectiveness

Meeting Documents
Item 1. CWDC Steering Committee April 9 Meeting Agenda
Item 2. March 5 Draft Public Session Notes
Item 5. [DRAFT] Steering Committee Conflict of Interest Policy
Item 6. [DRAFT] Pilot Project Decision-making document

Action Items
- California Water Data Consortium (Consortium) staff to include links to documents in the meeting summary notes
- Consortium staff to send out the conflict of interest policy for Steering Committee members C to complete once approved by the Board
- Consortium staff to send out link to the new website once it has launched
- Consortium staff to reach out for LIDAR contacts
- When available, Consortium staff to send groundwater pilot project press release with Steering Committee members to share with their networks
- The next CWDC Data for Lunch event is April 29th

Welcome, Goals, and Agenda Overview
Mike Antos, California Water Data Consortium (Consortium) Steering Committee Co-Chair, opened the meeting and confirmed a quorum at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Antos welcomed participants and reviewed the meeting goals and agenda.

Ariel Ambruster, facilitator from the Consensus and Collaboration Program at CSU, Sacramento reviewed the meeting agreements.

Approval Items
Approve: Meeting minutes from March 5th Public Session
Chris McCready, Consortium Steering Committee Co-Chair stated that meeting notes from the March 5th meeting were sent ahead of the meeting. One clarification was received from Susan Tatayon which has been incorporated. Ms. McCready asked if there were any additional amendments to either set of meeting notes. None were raised. Deb Agarwal suggested adding links to document in the minutes moving forward.

***Steering Committee Action**:* Ms. Tatayon moved to approve the March 5 meeting minutes. Dr. Agarwal seconded the motion. The motion passed 9-0-1. Mr. Antos abstained from the votes because he was not in attendance at the last meeting.

Informational Items

CEO Updates

Tara Moran, Consortium CEO, gave an update on activities. Specifically, the Consortium is planning to undertake a Mission/Vision/Values process. This process will build on the existing work and guidance developed before and since the Consortium was formed. An ad hoc board committee has been formed to guide this process and help with outputs.

Dr. Moran thanked all who joined and participated in the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training conducted by Jonathan Mayes. The goal is to have this session kick off a larger DEI effort within the Consortium. Staff are working with the Governance Committee on next steps. Steering Committee members will be asked about potential next steps at the end of this meeting. These suggestions will be taken back to the Governance committee for consideration.

The Consortium website is being transitioned to a different hosting service, which will allow expanded functionality such the development of pilot project pages and other updates.

General Updates

Ms. McCready thanked the Steering Committee for all the time and effort that they put into the Consortium, especially in these early days as the Consortium is developing processes. Ms. McCready acknowledged how busy Steering Committee members are and asked that Steering Committee members let Steering Committee Co-chairs or Consortium staff as much notice as possible for potential scheduling conflicts so that the agenda can be arranged to ensure that voting items are scheduled for times when the most Steering Committee members will be present.

In an effort to streamline voting the Steering Committee members will be asking for first and seconds for motion. Then they will move to starting with the opposed and abstentions and then conclude that everyone remaining is an "aye" vote. There was no disagreement with this proposed process. Additionally, Mr. Antos reiterated that the Consortium seeks to develop consensus-seeking processes whenever possible. The co-chairs consider the significant work that occurs in advance of formal Steering Committee votes as an important part of the consensus building process. Mr. Antos checked for questions and received none.

Approval Items

Proposed Steering Committee Conflict of Interest Policy

Nancy Saracino, outside general counsel for the Consortium, shared a conflict of interest (COI) policy developed based on feedback from an ad hoc Steering Committee. Ms. Saracino indicated that as a nonprofit entity the Consortium needs to meet its Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requirements, including ensuring that the those making decisions affecting the organization are not influenced by personal profit or gain. The COI policy sets the expectation that those participating in the governance process act on behalf of the interests of the organization rather than personal interests. Setting and maintaining these expectations is also important for the Consortium to maintain a neutral forum. Many of the Steering Committee members are involved because of their association with organizations or relationships in this industry in California and those relationships may rise to the level, at times, that

Steering Committee members should consider abstaining from a vote. The COI policy includes an annual disclosure, which will help with compliance and serve as a reminder that Steering Committee members consider potential conflicts. Additionally, there will be time provided during Steering Committee meetings to disclose potential or actual conflicts. Ms. Saracino asked if there were any questions or comments from the Steering Committee and received none. Ms. Saracino thanked the ad hoc committee, Mr. Antos, Ms. McCready, Drew Atwater, and Ms. Tatayon for their work on developing the policy.

All Steering Committee members and Working Group Co-Chairs will be asked to complete the COI policy annually and disclose any potential conflicts to the Consortium CEO or Steering Committee Co-chairs as they arise. There is no stigma associated disclosing conflicts. It is just how business needs to be managed. Ms. Saracino asked if there were any questions. None were raised. Ms. McCready thanked Ms. Saracino for drafting this policy.

Ms. Saracino noted the motion for consideration is that the Steering Committee recommend that the Board approve the Steering Committee Conflict of Interest Policy.

Steering Committee Action: Mr. Antos moved to approve the motion. Nick Martorano seconded the motion. The motion passed 10-0-0.

Proposed Pilot Project Decision-making Process

Mr. Antos shared the pilot project decision-making process document and reminded the Steering Committee that this process had been discussed at previous Steering Committee meetings. The document and associated process have not changed since the last time it was provided to the Steering Committee. There has been informal conversation with the Board, and Staff has not received any red flags from any of the Steering Committee or Board members.

Mr. Antos presented Steering Committee members with the motion for consideration: that the Steering Committee recommend that the Board approve the plot project decision-making process.

Steering Committee Action: Joaquin Esquivel moved to approve the motion. Ms. Tatayon seconded the motion. The motion passed 10-0 -0.

Mr. Esquivel and Ms. Saracino left the meeting at approximately 1:55 p.m.

Informational Items

Pilot Project Update

Dr. Moran thanked all of the Steering Committee members who have been attending the working group meetings. She indicated that having their expertise on technical and policy items has been tremendously valuable and highlights the strength of the Consortium.

Delta Update

This pilot project was approved at our last steering committee meeting and has been formally approved by the Board. This is now an official Consortium project.

LiDAR Update

The LIDAR working group heard from Joy Bonaguro about a state initiative called the Data Acquisition Program, which seeks to acquire statewide data and make it available across state agencies, as well as from the Department of Conservation on LiDAR data and some of its potential applications. The working group is working toward a workshop to coordinate LiDAR data collection efforts moving forward. Consortium staff will be reaching out to all the Steering Committee members in the next few weeks to update the contact list of people who are interested in or are already collecting LiDAR data, which could include local, state, federal, private, etc.

Groundwater Elevation Update

Dr. Moran provided an update on the conversations with the Department of Water Resources (DWR), and the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) about the potential to expand an open-source water accounting platform developed by Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and Rosedale Rio-Bravo Water Storage District. This project will include two components: the co-development of data standards to facilitate data sharing and regional analyses and expansion of the open-source water accounting platform. The next step is to bring in additional stakeholders as this project moves forward. The state is working on a press release which Dr. Moran will share with the Steering committee when it's ready.

Urban Water Update

The goal of this project is to look at urban water reports and identify areas to align data collection between the reports. The project is narrowing in on creating a co-developed report with a section devoted to each of the six reports. There is a draft outline that the project leads, Sadie Gill and Rafael Maestu, pulled out of a conversation with many of members of the Steering Committee. Ms. Gill and Mr. Maestu have also had an initial conversation with DWR and there is interest in bringing someone from DWR on to help facilitate this project. This will be important because four of the six reports are collected by DWR while the remaining two are collected by SWRCB. Thus, it will be important to have representation from both agencies. The next step will be to create a work plan and figure out how to incorporate feedback from local entities.

Mr. Antos asked how the projects are advancing. Dr. Moran said each pilot project has bi-weekly meetings that are open to all Steering Committee members. Also, there is one working group co-chair meeting, also bi-weekly, which helps to ensure learning across the pilot projects. Right now, the working group co-chairs are leads for many of the current projects. However, as projects form more organically, there will ideally be leads for projects that are not the working group co-chairs.

Diversity, equity and inclusion training

- Dr. Moran updated that a Board committee is evaluating about the next steps around DEI and is interested in hearing the Steering Committee members' thoughts. Steering committee members provided a variety of DEI-related suggestions for the Governance Committee to consider.

Martha Davis joined at 2:35 p.m.

Mini-evaluation of SC meetings

Mr. Antos stated that the Consortium staff distributed a survey about the way the steering committee has been operating to date. Survey did not get participation from everyone on the committee, in general some feedback was:

- Everyone is in a generous spirit about the building phase we are in and how to be effective together
- There is some consensus around the idea that these meetings are too long, either length or frequency should be shortened
- Suggestion that there should be time for SC members to update on relevant items.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Debrief

Ms. Miller reviewed the action items:

- Consortium staff to include links to documents in the meeting minutes
- Consortium staff to send out the conflict of interest policy for SC to fill out once approved by the Board
- Consortium staff to send out link to the new website once it has launched
- Consortium staff to reach out for LIDAR contacts
- When available, Consortium staff to send groundwater pilot project press release with Steering Committee members to share with their networks
- The next CWDC Data for Lunch event is April 29th

Dr. Moran added Data for Lunch info. The April Data for Lunch invite has been sent and an invite for the May Data for Lunch will be sent shortly.

Mr. Antos closed the meeting at approximately 2:50 pm.

Meeting Attendance

Participants who called in to the virtual meeting via telephone only are not included in this list.

Steering Committee Members

- Deb Agarwal, Department Head and Senior Scientist, Data Science and Technology Department, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
- Mike Antos, Senior Integrated Water Management Specialist, Stantec Consulting
- Drew Atwater, Manager of Rates, Charges, and Financial Planning, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
- Christina Babbitt, Senior Manager, CA Groundwater Program – Environmental Defense Fund
- Joy Bonaguro, Chief Data Officer, State of California
- Martha Davis, Retired Assistant General Manager/Executive Manager for Policy Development for Inland Empire Utilities
- Joaquin Esquivel, Chair – State Water Resources Control Board
- David Harris, Enterprise Chief Data Officer, California Natural Resources Agency
- Nick Martorano, Director, California Water Quality Monitoring Council
- Chris McCready, Principal Engineer, California Department of Water Resources
- Susan Tatayon, Chair of the Delta Stewardship Council

Working Group Co-Chairs

- Sadie Gill, Senior Data Scientist, FlowWest

Board Members

Consortium Staff, Volunteers, and Consultants

- Ariel Ambruster, Lead Facilitator, The Consensus and Collaboration Program, CSU Sacramento
- Amanda Miller, Program Operations Manager, California Water Data Consortium
- Tara Moran, President and CEO, California Water Data Consortium
- Nancy Saracino, Managing Attorney, Western Energy & Water

Other Participants