

California Water Data Consortium Steering Committee Meeting Notes

October 8, 2021

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Meeting Goals

- Provide a venue for Steering Committee members to update one another on their water data-related work and potential opportunities for collaboration or coordination
- Confirm Steering Committee Co-Chair selections, term renewals, and Working Group Co-Chair selections
- Update and discuss Consortium pilot projects and events

Meeting Documents

Item 1. CWDC SC Agenda 10.08.2021

Item 2. CWDC Steering Committee Aug 13 Public Session Meeting Notes

Item 8. CWDC Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget

Action Items

- Please send staff suggestions of people that staff should talk to for the value of data project.
- Please send staff recommendations for Data for Lunch speakers/topics for the upcoming year.
- Please let staff know if you would like to join the ad hoc committee to discuss a formal document outlining the relationship between the PAT and Consortium.
- Dr. Moran shared the urban water outreach invitee list, please let staff know if you would like us to extend the invitation to others.
- Staff will follow up with Steering Committee members interested in the Equity Workgroup.

Welcome, Goals, and Agenda Overview

Tara Moran, Consortium Chief Executive Officer (CEO), opened the meeting. Dr. Moran welcomed participants and reviewed the meeting goals and agenda. Dr. Moran introduced Brent Vanderburgh, Senior Geologist Specialist at the State Water Resources Control Board. Mr. Vanderburgh will be joining the Steering Committee meetings to support Joaquin Esquivel moving forward. The Steering Committee charter does not allow for proxies, so Mr. Vanderburgh will not vote on Mr. Esquivel's behalf. Mr. Esquivel emphasized that he will continue to prioritize the Consortium's work and meetings, with Mr. Vanderburgh providing continuity if Mr. Esquivel is unable to attend some portion of the meetings.

Approval Items

Approve: Meeting minutes from August 13th Public Session

Chris McCready, Consortium Steering Committee Co-Chair, confirmed that a quorum of the Steering Committee was present at approximately 1:20 p.m. Ms. McCready noted that the meeting notes from the August 13, 2021 meeting were provided to the Steering Committee in advance of the meeting and no one requested revisions.

Steering Committee Action: Nick Martorano moved to approve the August 13, 2021 meeting minutes. Mike Antos seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0-1, with the abstention coming from Mr. Esquivel who was not present for the last meeting

Approve: Steering Committee Term Extensions

Dr. Moran explained that all Steering Committee members started their two-year terms concurrently. Thus, all Steering Committee member terms are currently slated to end December 31, 2022. Consortium staff recommend that half of the members serve in seats whose current terms extend to December 31, 2023, so that the terms on the Steering Committee are staggered. Therefore, Consortium staff recommend that the Steering Committee recommend that the Consortium Board of Directors approve extending the current terms for the Steering Committee seats currently held by state agency representatives Chris McCready, David Harris, and Nick Martorano, and non-state agency partners, Deb Agarwal, Mike Antos, and Christina Babbitt.

Steering Committee Action: Mr. Esquivel moved to recommend that the Consortium Board of Directors approve the staggered Steering Committee terms for half of the Steering Committee seats, so that the terms for these seats will run until December 31, 2023. The incumbents in the seats whose terms are extended by this motion are: state agency representatives Chris McCready, David Harris, and Nick Martorano, and non-state agency partners, Deb Agarwal, Mike Antos, and Christina Babbitt. Drew Atwater seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Approve: Steering Committee Co-Chair Selections

Dr. Moran explained that the Steering Committee Co-Chairs serve one-year terms, which means that Dr. Antos' service and that of Chris McCready as Co-Chairs will end at the end of 2021. Dr. Moran asked if there were any nominees for the Co-Chair positions. Mr. Harris nominated Chris McCready for the State Co-Chair position. Ms. McCready accepted the nomination. Martha Davis nominated Dr. Antos for the non-State Co-Chair position. Consortium staff recommend that the Steering Committee recommend that the Consortium Board of Directors approve Chris McCready and Mike Antos as Steering Committee Co-Chairs to serve from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.

Steering Committee Action: Mr. Esquivel moved to recommend that the Consortium Board of Directors approve Chris McCready and Mike Antos as Steering Committee Co-Chairs for 2022. Ms. Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Approve: Working Group Co-Chair Elections

Dr. Moran explained that Working Group Co-Chairs serve one-year terms. Because the Working Group Co-Chairs started concurrently, all are up for reelection this year. All Working Group Co-Chairs agreed to renew their terms, except Rich Pauloo, who, due to workload and other considerations, is not able to continue as a Working Group Co-Chair. Dr. Moran read a note of thanks from Rich Pauloo to Steering Committee members. Dr. Moran noted that the Consortium would like to consider this role and figure out what skills are needed before searching for a replacement. Consortium staff recommends that the Steering Committee recommend that the Consortium Board of Directors approve Mahesh Gautam, Sadie Gill and Rafael Maestu as Working Group Co-Chairs, and leave the other Technical Working Group chair unoccupied for the time being.

Steering Committee Action: Dr. Antos moved to recommend that the Consortium Board of Directors approve Mahesh Gautam and Sadie Gill as Working Group Co-chairs for the Data Users Working Group, and Rafael Maestu as Working Group Co-Chair for the Technical Working Group for 2022. Mr. Atwater seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Informational Items

Steering Committee Member Updates

Ms. McCready provided an update on upcoming state communications and outreach about open data.

Mr. Esquivel shared an update on the new water rights system work and the potential for the Consortium and others to plug in to the project. He also shared that drought.ca.gov could be a critical platform to show data on the drought and community experience and response.

Dr. Antos provided an update on the Flood-MAR effort by the Department of Water Resources to replenish groundwater with rain instead of snow and the 13 working groups in the Flood-MAR network. He shared that there is a survey open right now which will help Flood-MAR identify gaps. Dr. Antos encouraged Steering Committee members to complete the survey to report on their work.

CEO Updates

Dr. Moran provided updates on the following topics:

- **Mission, Vision, Principles, and Goals** – Dr. Moran thanked Steering Committee member for their feedback during the Mission, Vision, Principles, and Goals process that the Consortium has been undertaking. Staff is incorporating feedback from the most recent session with Board, Steering Committee, Working Group Co-Chairs and staff. The document will go to the Board for approval in December.
- **USBR WaterSMART Applied Science Grant** - The Consortium received a USBR WaterSMART Applied Science Grant. That grant will support the second phase of the Groundwater Accounting and Data Reporting Project.

- **Value of Water Data Project** - The Consortium received a grant from the Water Foundation to communicate the value of water data.
- **Data for Lunch** – The Consortium’s next Data for Lunch is on Oct. 19 with Dr. Letitia Grenier on the Delta Landscapes Scenario Planning Tool. Staff is looking for recommendations for speakers for 2022.
- **Optional In-person Consortium event** – The Consortium is hosting a small optional in-person event on Dec. 10 for Board, Steering Committee, Working Group Co-Chairs, and staff.
- **Partner Agency Team coordination** – Dr. Moran explained that there has been some interest in developing a document outlining the commitment between the Partner Agency Team (PAT) and the Consortium. The Consortium would like to create an ad hoc committee to examine this possibility. Dr. Antos and Ms. McCready volunteered to join the committee. Any work completed by the ad hoc committee will come back to the Steering Committee for review.
- **Streamlining the Steering Committee process** – Dr. Moran provided an update on work being done to streamline Steering Committee processes. She noted that the goals of streamlining include:
 - Building synergies and connections with existing projects;
 - Transitioning to quarterly Steering Committee meetings; and
 - Ensuring that Steering Committee members have the information they need to steer programmatic work, including budget and pilot project timelines.
- **Budget:** The Consortium Board has passed a budget for this fiscal year which was included in the materials for this meeting. Staff will use this information at the first quarterly Steering Committee meeting in 2022 to evaluate goals for 2022. Dr. Moran shared a timeline to show how the quarterly goals for the Steering Committee lines up with quarterly meetings for 2022.

[Update on Consortium Programs](#)

[Website Updates](#)

Ms. Miller shared links to two new project website pages. These are the Groundwater Accounting and Data Reporting Project and the LiDAR Project.

[Equity Workgroup](#)

Dr. Antos shared that Dr. Moran was on a racial equity panel at the State Water Resource Control Board’s (SWRCB) Water Data Science Symposium that started a conversation about considering equity in the Consortium’s work. The Consortium has formed a small workgroup with SWRCB, which Dr. Antos has joined. The group is looking for a Department of Water Resources (DWR) employee to participate. There are three ideas that the workgroup is considering and would like feedback:

- 1) Use the group to consider and strengthen the Consortium’s existing projects.

- 2) Do some policy analysis of data accessibility through an equity lens and make potential recommendations.
- 3) Work with the state to advance a small, new or existing project on water data and equity.

Reactions:

- Ms. Davis, Joy Bonaguro, Mr. Atwater, and Mr. Martorano would like to join the equity working group. Ms. McCreedy would also like to join and can offer connections to other DWR staff who may be appropriate to join.

Project Updates

Dr. Moran provided an update on the LiDAR, Delta and Groundwater pilot projects.

Urban Water Update

Rafael Maestu provided an update on the Urban Water Reporting Project. The working group has completed the template for the Urban Water Management Plan and the Conservation Plan. There is also a draft template for reporting entities to explain how they collect and report data to the state. The next steps for this project are to complete the template for the other four reports and to conduct small outreach meetings with data users, local reporting agencies, and the state agencies that lead these reports. Dr. Moran shared the invitee list for the three outreach meetings and encouraged Steering Committee members to review and suggest any additional contacts.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Ms. McCreedy concluded the meeting at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Meeting Attendance

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

Steering Committee Members

- **Mike Antos**, Senior Integrated Water Management Specialist, Stantec Consulting
- **Drew Atwater**, Manager of Rates, Charges, and Financial Planning, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
- **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

Working Group Co-Chairs

- **Rafael Maestu**, Economist and Chief Data Scientist, CA State Water Resources Control Board

Board Members

Consortium Staff, Volunteers, and Consultants

- **Amanda Miller**, Program Operations Manager, California Water Data Consortium
- **Tara Moran**, President and CEO, California Water Data Consortium
- **Brent Vanderburgh**, Senior Geologist Specialist at the State Water Resources Control Board

Other Participants

- Parastou Hooshalsadat