

California Water Data Consortium Steering Committee Meeting Notes

August 9, 2022

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Goals

- Consider recommending the Consortium as a member of the Internet of Water Coalition
- Consider recommending an amendment to the Steering Committee Charter
- Provide an update on Consortium projects and potential decision points

Action Items

- Consortium staff and/or Steering Committee Co-Chairs to take Steering Committee recommendations to Board of Directors for final approval, including:
 - Becoming an organizational member of the Internet of Water Coalition
 - Amendment to the Steering Committee Charter

Welcome, Goals, and Agenda Overview

Chris McCready, Consortium Steering Committee Co-Chair, opened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. and confirmed quorum. She reviewed the agenda.

Updates from Steering Committee Members

- Joaquin Esquivel gave an update on the importance of water data in decision making, as well as recent conversations on the importance of water rights work.
- Drew Atwater reminded folks that the annual California Water Data Summit is next week in Irvine, CA.
- Martha Davis gave an update on work she has been involved in on the intersection of water use, water data, climate change, and affordability. She discussed the importance of having data that fits together and enables us to plan for a future that is consistent with trends in the data and ensures we have water resilience and water affordability.
- Brent Vanderburgh gave an update that he is working to build the first water data governance team in the water rights division.

Approval Items

Approve: Meeting minutes from May 10th Public and Executive Sessions

Ms. McCready asked if there were any amendments or additions to the May 10 meeting minutes. None were suggested.

The Steering Committee Co-Chairs recommend that the Steering Committee approve the May 10th public session and executive meeting notes.

Steering Committee Action: Ms. Davis moved to approve both the May 10th public and executive sessions minutes and Mr. Atwater seconded. The minutes were approved 5 -1-0. Mr. Esquivel abstained as he was not present at the May meeting.

Approve: Invitation to Join Internet of Water Coalition

Tara Moran, Consortium CEO, introduced Peter Colohan, Executive Director of the Internet of Water Coalition. The Internet of Water has extended an invitation for the Consortium to become a member of the newly formed Internet of Water Coalition. He presented at the last Steering Committee meeting and two questions came up: 1) was it an org or individual membership invitation and 2) term lengths. Mr. Colohan clarified that the Consortium is being invited as an organizational member, which will include two (one virtual and one in-person) meetings each year. Dr. Moran clarified that the term length for the membership would be three years. Amanda Miller asked if the three-year term applies to the organization and if the staff person who represents the Consortium could change. Mr. Colohan agreed that the term limit applied to the organization, and that organizational membership would allow for the staff person representing it to change.

Mike Antos joined the meeting at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Dr. Moran clarified that she would be the first staff representative to the Internet of Water Coalition. Ms. McCready asked if there were any substantive questions that would affect the vote. None were raised.

Consortium staff recommend that the Steering Committee recommend the California Water Data Consortium become an organizational member of the Internet of Water Coalition.

Steering Committee Action: Mike Antos moved to approve the recommendation that the California Water Data Consortium become an organizational member of the Internet of Water Coalition and Mr. Atwater seconded. The recommendation was approved 7-0-0.

Mr. Colohan left the meeting at approximately 2:50 p.m.

Approve: Revision to the Steering Committee Charter

Dr. Antos, Steering Committee Co-Chair, provided an overview the suggested change to the Steering Committee charter. The current language in the charter defines quorum as including “at least 3 state agency representatives and 3 non-state agency representatives.” The proposed change to “**Quorum.** A majority of Steering Committee members then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Quorum must include at least half the seated state agency representatives and at least half the seated non-state agency representatives.” is being recommended because there are two empty Steering Committee seats right now and the

Committee would like i) additional flexibility in the definition of quorum to scale with the number of seated Steering Committee members and ii) to enable more time to fill empty seats when vacated. Specifically, at present, there is a desire to increase representation on the Steering Committee and doing so will take time and a thoughtful process.

Steering Committee Action: Ms. Davis moved to approve the minutes and Mr. Esquivel seconded. The charter revision was approved 7 -0-0.

Informational and Discussion Items

Steering Committee Member Seat Updates

Ms. McCready stated that there is still a state agency seat vacancy, which was created when Susan Tatayon retired. The Partner Agency Team has developed a list of potential candidates, but have not yet engaged them. Ms. McCready noted that it will be important to find someone who has the energy and interest to carry them through the next two years. Dr. Antos updated that Consortium staff has been doing outreach across the state for candidates for the non - state seat, previously filled by Christina Babbitt. Dr. Antos reminded the Steering Committee that staff will be looking to all of us to help with the recruitment. If anyone has ideas for recruitment or recommendations for individuals to talk to, please let staff know.

Overview of Existing Consortium Projects and Programs

Equity Workgroup

- Dr. Antos gave an update on what the equity work group’s recent efforts. The work has been a multi-prong approach, including 1) conducting outreach and listening to individuals in community-based organizations or who partner closely with community-based organizations to build relationships and learn about existing water data needs and 2) providing research guidance to Aaron Dickinson on his master project from Duke University’s Sanford School of Public Policy. His research explored potential barriers and solutions to water data access with an emphasis on equity.
- Maria Doerr, Consortium consultant, has been supporting the equity work group’s outreach and engagement effort. She has interviewed several individuals in community-based organizations or who partner closely with community-based organizations and has listened in on several public meetings discussing water and equity topics.
 - Specific goals for the outreach effort include:
 - Better understanding the experiences, priorities, and interests of diverse leaders and the communities they serve as they connect to water, data, or related topics
 - Better understanding the capacity needs of communities to engage in water and water data
 - Identifying best practices for engagement with underserved communities
 - Several major themes

- Data accessibility and capacity building is top priority, rather than a need for more data
 - Water data that is actionable and advocacy-ready is most useful
 - More local, granular data would help support those at greatest risk.
 - There is a data and information gap around water governance and leadership.
 - Ms. Doerr has been taking these themes and thinking about how the Consortium can reflect them in future work.
 - Ms. Davis added that these themes resonate with her. She gave an example, she thought she knew of data that could answer a question she was working on. That data that is published through the City of Los Angeles mayor’s office however, when she went to retrieve it, she found that had not been updated for a year or more. She empathized with people who struggle to find data.
 - Mr. Esquivel added that these are barriers but also opportunities. There are communities that have not been seen and data can help us to see and lead to discussions and solutions.
 - Ms. Doerr outlined next steps:
 - Continue listening and building relationships with community-based groups
 - Assess specific avenues to bring insights in to current/future Consortium projects
 - Identify channels to support capacity building through projects
 - Questions for the Steering Committee:
 - Is there anyone else you would recommend we speak to or any public hearings or events you would recommend we attend?
 - Dr. Antos recommended the SAFER advisory group as a possible place for listening or discussion.
 - Ms. Davis recommended the organizers of recent Great Basin Water Justice Summit, which included Indigenous representation and leaders who are thinking about justice and water issues.
 - There were also suggestions to consider connecting to the CA Water Plan Update in 2023 and DWR’s Groundwater Live [website](#).
- Dr. Antos introduced a topic for discussion about AB1755 and equity. He thinks there is an opportunity for legislation to build on AB1755 with an intentional equity focus. Dr. Antos posed the question: What role can this committee and the Consortium play in revealing a framework for an add on to AB1755 to advance equity? He noted that while the Consortium is not in a position to advocate for policy or legislation, it could provide a venue for these discussions, then if there are advocates who want to work on this, they could bring this forward.

- There was discussion about how to better make equity part of the discussion, the need to find and identify data gaps, and around resources and funding for this work.
- Mr. Antos noted that due to time constraints, this conversation would be continued, likely at the Consortium's next equity working group meeting.

Nick Martorano joined at approximately 3:35pm.

Urban Water Reporting Project

Rafael Maestu, Working Group co-chair, gave an update on the Urban Water Reporting Project.

- He gave updates on the recent workshop hosted on June 6th.
 - The workshop looked at the summary of findings of the analysis, had a discussion of the identified problems and discussion of proposed solutions.
 - At the workshop, participants volunteered to help or lead potential groups for each of the solutions.
- Considerations for where to go next based on the proposed solutions and volunteers:
 - Where is the highest value?
 - Where is there interest?
 - What role should the Consortium play?
 - What is the Consortium's capacity to support work groups?
- Proposed next steps:
 - Document summary of workshop findings and recommendations (in progress)
 - Meeting with working group leads across the five potential solutions to ensure ongoing interest, understand needs (budget, timeline, necessary resources) and develop a one-page overview
 - Consortium staff and the urban water working group will use this information to prioritize working groups and support
 - Dr. Moran added that if Steering Committee members have suggestions for other information to gather to help inform decision making on what working groups and solutions to prioritize, please put them in chat.

Groundwater Accounting and Data Reporting

- Dr. Moran gave an update on the funding for the Groundwater Accounting and Data Reporting project.
- Mahesh Gautam, Working Group Co-Chair, gave an update on the data reporting format work that is happening as part of the Groundwater Accounting and Data Reporting project. The data reporting format work began at the June 14th Technical Working Group meeting. Feedback was solicited on: reporting challenges, additional complimentary data types, and information on data sources, guidance documents, reporting programs.

- Mr. Gautam also gave a timeline update: to date a network of state and local agencies has been developed, they have compiled existing reporting data formats, and understanding existing data reporting challenges. He shared the participant list for the technical working group and asked if people have any suggested additions.

CEO Update

Dr. Moran provided brief updates:

- Value of Water Data – staff has a draft version of the technical report, and anticipates sharing the next draft version with the Steering Committee for review this month.
- Hiring – Hannah Ake will be starting with the Consortium on Sept 19th.
- Conflict of interest forms - Ms. Miller reminded folks to send these in along with their in-kind hours and optional demographic survey.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

- If you have questions or suggestions for any of the topics discussed today, including the Internet of Water, equity work group, Urban or Groundwater project, please reach out to Consortium staff.

Ms. McCready closed the meeting at 4:00 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**, Deputy General Manager, Moulton Niguel Water District
- **Martha Davis**, Retired Assistant General Manager/Executive Manager for Policy Development for Inland Empire Utilities
- **Joaquin Esquivel**, Chair, CA 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**, Manager, Technical Support and Integrated Data, CA Department of Water Resources

Working Group Co-Chairs

- **Mahesh Gautam**, Senior Water Resources Engineer, CA Department of Water Resources
- **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
- **Maria Doerr**, Consultant to the California Water Data Consortium
- **Brent Vanderburgh**, Senior Geologist Specialist, CA State Water Resources Control Board

Other Participants

- Mario Amorelli
- Peter Colohan
- Kamyar Guivetchi
- Patty Poire