

**Minutes of the
ASBS Natural Water Quality Committee**
August 25, 2009
at the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

Members in attendance:

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

Members absent:

Burt Jones - University of Southern California

Others in attendance:

Gary Garafolo - Caltrans
Thomas Quattlebaum
Howard Bunce - Marin County
Katie Brown - Bodega Marine Lab
Adam Waxall -
Nora Jans - RBF Consulting
Kimberly O'Connell

Dominic Gregorio began the meeting at 10:15 PM. There were nine items on the day's agenda: 1) Introductions and approval of minutes; 2) Updates; 3) Finalize total residual chlorine white paper; 4) Discuss TCDD white paper; 5) report on SIO monitoring results; 6) Overarching issues; 7) Intertidal Bio monitoring report; 8) Regional and statewide monitoring results; and 9) Review timeline, discussion and next steps.

The minutes from April 3, 2009 were reviewed and, with minor edits, were approved by the NWQC.

Dominic initiated the second item providing updates on six items:

- a) The next and final meeting was rescheduled from Nov 5 to Nov 23. A pre-meeting conference call was scheduled for Oct 21 9:30 till noon
- b) Regulatory activities update included the SWRCB's soon to be released of the EIR. The pending CEQA document will include the new Special Protections.
- c) The SWRCB's new ASBS video was demonstrated.
- d) Due to the state's economic status, all Proposition 84 grants have been placed on hold.

Rich Gossett led item 3, review of the white paper on Total Residual Chlorine (TRC) measurements in marine waters. The white paper was presented a previous meeting. Other than some additional literature review, no new activity had occurred on this product.

Rich Gossett led item 4, discussion of TCDD white paper. SIO has measured TCDD in its effluent, but does not have any processes that adds TCDD and measures similar concentrations in its influent. Rich has been conducting literature searches on TCDD in the ambient environment. The Committee agreed that a white paper on TCDD would be appropriate. The Committee suggested the white paper should address three questions: 1) Is TCDD found naturally (i.e., from wildfires)? 2) Can natural TCDD be differentiated from anthropogenic TCDD? and 3) What is an approximate natural level of TCDD?

Kimberly O'Connell led item 5 on SIO monitoring update. Kimberly handed out a spreadsheet of effluent and receiving water monitoring results during dry weather. Based on the spreadsheet, all effluent and receiving water results were below permit limits, including copper. The Committee made several suggestions including: 1) remove the comparison of receiving water results to permit limits and use California Ocean Plan Table B limits instead; 2) create a trend chart for individual parameter concentrations over time; and 3) double check the exceedingly low copper concentration in receiving water samples.

- The Committee requested to see wet weather results at the next meeting.

Bruce Posthumus led item 6, over arching issues. There were three issues Bruce wanted to address: 1) How do deal with non-direct discharges that influence ASBS water quality; 2) attainability of natural water quality, especially in areas with rampant development? and 3) Recommendations on how to best protect ASBS given potential constraints on achieving natural water quality? Bruce illustrated the potential for cumulative impacts on ASBS water quality from multiple sources outside the ASBS. This led the Committee to revisit their definition of natural water quality, including the concept of reference water quality thresholds, mass-based limits, and the need for evaluating effects on biota. The Committee discussed possible management responses including identifying chemical impacts, focusing on direct discharges first, then moving onto indirect discharges next. The Committee agreed to two action items:

- There is a need for a strategic process for identifying and regulating both direct and nondirect discharges
- Include a section in the final report to deal with these issues. Bruce will create the first draft for our next meeting

Ken started the 7th item on biological monitoring. He gave a status report on the Bight'08 subtidal biological monitoring. More than 60 rocky reefs were sampled between July 2008 and Jan 2009 including cold and warm water ecoregions, mainland and islands, and every ASBS in southern California. Dominic followed up by giving a status update on intertidal monitoring. A pilot study, funded by delinquent ASBS stakeholders, was conducted by Pete Raimondi at UC Santa Cruz. His pilot study reviewed the intertidal

biological data submitted with on-time ASBS applications. He found a difference between ASBS discharge sites and a reference site in 3 of the 4 studies that met the evaluation criteria. However, the studies could not decipher if the changes were the result of the ASBS discharge itself. The second element of the pilot study was to design a protocol as a precursor to a statewide intertidal monitoring program. The design was reviewed by an expert panel. Pete will initiate the intertidal monitoring with the new protocol in southern California. He is conducting site reconnaissance next month with sampling to begin in October.

Ken presented the 8th item on B'08 ASBS water quality monitoring. Two types of sites were selected for wet weather monitoring; targeted sites and probabilistic sites. Ken had conducted some initial data analysis for the probabilistic sites, collected along nearly every mainland ASBS in California. Preliminary results indicated that: 1) concentrations were generally low and that concentrations changed little near the discharge compared to away from the discharge; 2) most sites were not toxic; and 3) lots more work to do.

Dominic led discussion on the 9th item reviewing timelines and next steps. The November meeting will be the last formal meeting of the Committee. Therefore, the Committee began discussions about the format and content of the Final Report. It was decided that the format should be structured around the Committee's three questions. Ken was asked to prepare an outline for the conference call on October 21.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05