

**Minutes of the
ASBS Natural Water Quality Committee**

March 12, 2007

at the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

Members in attendance:

Andrew Dickson - Scripps Institute of Oceanography (via telephone)
Dominic Gregorio - State Water Resources Control Board
Burt Jones - University of Southern California
Bruce Posthumus - San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Kenneth Schiff - Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
Jim Allen - Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
Steve Murray – California State University Fullerton

Members absent:

Rich Gossett - CRG Marine Laboratories

Others in attendance:

Rolf Schtotl – AMEC Environmental, Inc.
Connie Anderson - State Water Resources Control Board
Kimberly O'Connell - Scripps Institute of Oceanography

Dominic Gregorio began the meeting at 9:30 AM. There were six items on the day's agenda: 1) approve minutes and finalize meeting schedule; 2) SCCWRP contract status; 3) Update on State Board ASBS activities; 4) Update on health of the rocky intertidal; 5) Status of Scripps' Institute of Oceanography (SIO) monitoring; and 6) Update on changes to SIO monitoring.

The minutes from Dec 1 and 15, 2006 were approved. Dates for the next three meetings were selected: May 7, Jul 27, and Sep 7. The meetings will alternate between SIO and SCCWRP.

The SWRCB is issuing a contract to SCCWRP to support the ASBS Natural Water Quality Committee. The contract will cover meeting support including travel funds and stipends to Committee members. It will also require annual reports of Committee Progress. The Contract had recently been signed by SCCWRP and was in Sacramento being finalized.

The SWRCB had four ASBS activities to update. The first activity was the release of the initial baseline study and negative declaration at the Bodega Bay Marine Lab. A quick summary of the initial study included discharge exceedences of Cu, Ag, and residual

chlorine. A small impact to algal diversity was potentially observed in the lower intertidal zone. In the future, staff is recommending that the lab waste seawater discharge to be monitored twice per year for chemistry, and storm water discharges once per year. Staff is also recommending a biological survey at least once per permit cycle.

The second SWRCB ASBS activity was the status of statewide exceptions and permit applications. Connie Anderson used this item to introduce activities in the La Jolla ASBS adjacent to the San Diego-Scripps ASBS. The City had completed their first year monitoring report and had found significant concentrations of ammonia in the discharge, but not the receiving waters. Also, significant concentrations of metals (i.e., As, Cr, Cu) were observed in both the discharge and the receiving water. Kimberly described a joint project by SIO, the City, and San Diego Coastkeeper to create the La Jolla Shores Coastal Management Plan. The management plan included four elements: 1) an information management system to share data; 2) an ecosystem assessment; 3) urban runoff management activities; and 4) outreach. The alliance had recently been asking the state for additional funds to implement the management plan. The issue of the SIO and the City working together was asked. The response was that they do work together, but probably not as closely as they could or should. Therefore, the group recommended the following action item:

- Invite the City of San Diego to the next Natural Water Committee meeting

The third and fourth SWRCB items were regional reference monitoring and relevant reference studies collected to date. Ken described a recent project conceived by the SWRCB to sample discharges and receiving waters near reference watersheds. These concentrations would then be compared to discharge and receiving water concentrations from ASBS. Where large differences between reference and ASBS discharge locations existed, targeted monitoring for biological impacts would be prioritized. There were two primary issues associated with this conceptual idea. The first was being able to get the ASBS dischargers to collaborate to ensure comparability with the reference watershed monitoring program. The second issue was the reference watershed monitoring design elements. Ken described the design elements that SCCWRP used for a previous study quantifying natural contributions of bacteria. The design factor that received the most attention was site selections. Site selection criteria could differ between natural, minimally disturbed, least disturbed, and open land use.

- The Committee agreed that site selection should involve more than just the committee and the SWRCB may want to target stakeholders and environmental groups.

The next agenda item focused on an update from the Marine Rocky Intertidal Network (MARINE) and their activities to develop an assessment index for grading their long term intertidal monitoring sites. Steve described the process, which was difficult due to extreme heterogeneity in biological responses. In addition, where impacts did occur, they were not always a result of water quality (e.g., trampling).

The fifth agenda item was a summary of SIO monitoring. Kimberly showed the Committee their new website that serves reports and data. She stated that there was no correlation between SIO discharges and paired receiving water samples for bacteria. She also showed some preliminary reasonable potential analysis (RPA) produced by the SWRCB freeware. RPA is conducted to remove or reduce the frequency of sampling for specific constituents that are considered little to no risk in the discharge (i.e., below the standards). This led to the following action item:

- Kim should provide the Committee a summary of the RPA analysis at the next meeting
- The Committee will provide technical advice to the RWQCB and SWRCB on modifications to the constituent list

Kim also discussed the imminent release of SIO's nonindigenous species control plan and dilution/dispersion model. Finally, she gave a sneak preview to the bioaccumulation study results. The Committee asked for:

- A summary of the bioaccumulation study to assist with the RPA analysis interpretation

The sixth agenda item was on changes to SIO monitoring. Bruce described the two mechanisms for altering SIO's permit monitoring and reporting program. The Executive Officer can add more monitoring to the program through a Section 13267 order. The second option is to modify permit monitoring and reporting program (i.e. trading off one type of monitoring for another type), but this requires an action of the RWQCB. Either way, any alteration needs to be specific in terms of effort and use of the information. The RWQCB and staff would appreciate any suggestions or endorsements by the Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.