

**Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 17, 2002**  
**Bonderson Building**  
**901 P Street, Hearing Room 102-A**  
**Meeting Summary**

**Subcommittee members (or their alternates) and agency liaisons present:**

Serge Birk (CVPWA)	Brian Kinnear (NMFS)
Nick DeCroce (Cal Trout)	Tim Ramirez (Resources Agency)
Lisa Holm (CCWD)	Steve Shaffer (CDFA)
Todd Manly (NCWA)	Dave Zezulak (DFG)
Becky Sheehan (CFBF)	
Bernice Sullivan (Friant WUA)	
Tom Zuckerman (CDWA)	
Kane Totzke (KCWA)	

**Introductions and Subcommittee status report:**

The meeting began with introductions and a subcommittee status report. Serge Birk requested that the subcommittee review and approve the summary for the last meeting. Dan Castleberry (Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) solicited comments on the summary for the last subcommittee meeting. Serge requested that the Environmental Water Program (EWP) be on each meetings agenda as it is an important issue. He also felt that action item #8 in the summary should be a stronger statement and suggested changing it to "need to bring EWP needs to BDPAC".

Tom Zuckerman reported on the June Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee (BDPAC) meeting. He related that many BDPAC members had commented on the importance of the delta tour that was given prior to the meeting and the intention of CALFED to provide similar tours in the various regions of the state where BDPAC will be meeting in the future.

The main topic of discussion that Tom recalled dealt with the In-Delta Storage Program. There were more uncertainties involved in in-Delta storage than originally believed which has led to the feasibility study taking longer to complete than originally anticipated. The delay will bring the timeline for in-Delta storage in sync with the feasibility studies being done for the other storage options.

Tim Ramirez added that BDPAC had also discussed the up coming water bond. Potential opposition appears to be diffusing due to the urgency to provide funding to CALFED and other water issues.

Federal legislation appears to be moving forward with Senator Boxer joining Senator Feinstein on Feinstein's bill. Calvert bill is still in committee, but moving forward.

**Ecosystem Restoration Program status report:**

Dan Castleberry informed the Subcommittee that ERP had lost one staff member, Michael Coleman who was the Delta Regional Coordinator, but had gained a new

member, Rhonda Reed, who will be in charge of Program Integration and Implementation.

Dan noted that the Year 3 Annual Work plan should be ready for the Subcommittee to review by their August 27<sup>th</sup> meeting after which it will move on to the full BDPAC in September.

Terry Mills explained how the “Single Blueprint” and the work plan relate. In the past, the blueprint has been a retrospective document describing how the program spent its money over the past year. This was done for disclosure purposes to show how the program was meeting the commitment made in the Record of Decision (ROD) that \$150 million would be spent by ERP in order to attain the milestones provided in the biological opinions. The work plan describes what the program plans on accomplishing in the upcoming year.

At Serge’s request, there was some prolonged discussion of the Environmental Water Program (EWP) and how Battle Creek might be able to take advantage of the money set aside for that program in the ROD. Serge’s main point was that we have a program that has been substantially funded, that has years of real time data, and that we have the opportunity to implement adaptive management by providing the project with money to buy water. He asked if the Subcommittee wants to look at the needs of individual projects and decide which are the highest priorities for continuing funding. This group has the stakeholder input, science program nexus and CALFED and agency management support. However, currently the group is not set up to deal with individual projects and has more of a programmatic scope. He hopes that the group will develop a process for funding pilot projects as the opportunity arises. Serge was reminded that the previous Ecosystem Roundtable set up a process for providing extra funding to projects if deemed advisable through the amendment process. A group formed as part of that process, the Contract Amendments Workgroup, continues to meet on a regular basis, although with a modified structure.

### **Next steps for the Subcommittee**

The Subcommittee spent a substantial amount of time commenting on a March 5, 2002 draft document called **Desired Outcomes for the Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee**. The subcommittee discussed each of the outcomes described in the draft document, starting with the Process section and working back to the Administration section. There was also discussion on trying to determine the level of detail the subcommittee wanted.

### **Process**

**Bullet one** - “Agreement on the process for establishing regional strategies and local partnerships to implement the ERP throughout all ecozones, and actual strategy development/partnership activities for at least three ecozones.”

Request to have the “look-back exercise” information categorized as to ecozone so there is a record of what we know per zone and what we still need to learn, or do. Regional strategies should be tied to what has been done. Effort should tie to Implementation Plan and regional plans.

Design process to amend existing Implementation Plan and develop regional plans, to include what's been accomplished to date (analogy to a shopping list approach, checking off needs as they are filled).

Include process to get information on progress through dialog in each of the regions.

Don't want to lose the "big picture" of fixing the whole ecosystem by focusing too closely on ecozones.

Need to revisit the core team process from a few years ago. Use what we know to assist the decision making.

A need for a decision tree that would assist in prioritizing so that as certain program elements become less of a priority due to their needs being met, action on those elements is decreased while actions are increased on other elements. Need to be more explicit in how ecozones are prioritized.

Prioritizing by ecozone will make it easier to acquire the local input in developing ecozone strategies.

**Bullet two** – "Initiation of and progress by a sound science-based process for refining and quantifying performance metrics and articulating how new information will be used to modify implementation. This process could be similar to the "core team" approach used in developing the ERP Strategic Plan for Ecosystem Restoration and be overseen by the ERP's Independent Science Board and the CALFED Science Program."

Some brief discussion of prior work and an e-mail that Sam Luoma sent the subcommittee on July 15<sup>th</sup> concerning performance measures and the Environmental Water Program, but no comments suggesting that the bullet describing the outcome should be revised.

## **Implementation**

**Bullet one** - "Successful implementation of the first year of the EWP, as demonstrated by development of a science-based plan for and purchase of water and/or water rights in at least high priority watersheds."

Major discussion ensued on the need for continued acquisition of land and/or water, especially without a coherent plan as to what the needs are. Some felt we shouldn't be buying just because the opportunity arises. One suggestion was to insert "then" prior to "purchase". There was give and take on how the program would deal with opportunities prior to a full plan being developed and whether taking advantage of opportunities would preclude the need to develop the plan. One suggestion was to include a deadline for developing a plan and potentially describe consequences for not meeting the deadline.

Consider including the ERP's Independent Science Board and CALFED Science Program in a manner similar to the second bullet under process.

Need a process for dealing with short, mid, and long-term needs.

**Bullet two** - "Minimum acreage of wetland/floodplain habitat protected/restored."

Dan described an approach to quantifying the desired outcome using targets described in the Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan and the Multi-Species Conservation Strategy. Dan referred to a table in a handout titled "Comparison of Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan and Multi-Species Conservation Strategy Habitat Acreage Targets". The handout was part of the response to comments for the CALFED EIR/EIS. The table totaled habitat acreage targets described for the ERP. Dan asked the subcommittee to consider using the acreage targets to develop annual targets by dividing the number of acres by the time frame a specific document based the target on. In some cases, the timeframe for attaining the target was 30 years. Those targets could be divided by 30 to provide annual targets. For some targets, the timeframe for attaining the target was 7 years. Those targets could be divided by 7 in order to provide the annual target acreage. Targets for the end of year 3 could then be generated by multiplying the annual goals by 3.

In general, the subcommittee thought the approach had merit, although several concerns were expressed. Some were concerned about how the information might be used to guide the program. For example, it could discourage consideration of projects where the total target might be met or exceeded in one acquisition. It might cause consternation if at the end of a year the program hadn't attained one of the annual targets, even though it would be possible to attain the 7-year target prior to the end of the 7 years. More of an accounting process than a scientific one. Could lead to accounting-based adaptive management, rather than science-based adaptive management. It was noted that a process to develop science-based performance metrics is identified under the Process section of the Desired Outcomes document, and that the habitat acreage targets could be replaced by new performance metrics once they were developed.

Terry Mills suggested that having short-term acreage goals would fit well with developing work plans by ecozones. It would also assist in tracking progress towards reaching the milestones.

Additional discussion occurred on how to actually measure progress, sometimes based on little baseline information.

Concerns were raised about the definitions of enhanced and restored in the handout, and some doubted whether the targets based on those definitions should be used as targets.

Some questioned why only a few habitat types were mentioned here and that other habitat types should be included, as well as metrics for other types of actions such as water acquisition. There was general agreement that the text should at least read "Minimum acreage of each habitat type protected or restored."

## Funding

**Bullet one** – “Initial state and/or federal action to secure a land and water acquisition account to support ERP implementation either as a stand alone fund or as a sub account in existing conservation funding revenues.”

Becky Sheehan questioned why land and water acquisition was identified here and not other topics. She was interested in the scientific basis for why these topics would be specifically identified as priorities versus other actions. Others agreed that land should not be called out specifically and it was suggested that it be removed. Some felt the intent was to focus on the water acquisition aspect. Concerns were raised about loss of flexibility and need for a drought reserve.

Tom Zuckerman noted that the first two bullets could be combined, since they both deal with water acquisition and also commented that there could be other priorities. Steve Shaffer noted a missing priority may be development of management plans for already funded projects.

Dan Castleberry suggested the group consider modifying the text to read “Initial state and federal action to secure support for ERP implementation for years 4 and beyond, either as a stand alone fund or as a sub account in existing conservation funding revenues.”

**Bullet two** – “Allocation of a significant portion of remaining or anticipated ERP funds to the water acquisition subaccount.”

In addition to comments about need for a drought reserve and combining bullets 1 and 2, concerns were raised about the meaning of “significant” and “water acquisition subaccount”, and the need for “remaining or anticipated” in the description of the outcome. Alternate text was proposed to read “Allocation of a portion of ERP funds to the Environmental Water Program.” Some agreed and others questioned the need for funds for water acquisition, especially given that funds had already been set aside for the EWP and remained available.

**Bullet three** – “The state’s introduction of draft legislation or executive action establishing the ERP water user fee contained in the ROD”

There were some in the subcommittee that did not agree that this was a desired outcome. Others pointed out that they were aware that other subcommittees identified a desire to achieve similar outcomes. Discussion ensued on wording in the ROD versus wording in the Framework for Action and the process for this group to provide recommendations when there is disagreement among subcommittee members. There was also debate on how the subcommittee should weigh in regarding governance. No consensus was reached on this topic.

**Bullet four** – “All Prop 204 funds used for EWA reimbursed.”

It was explained that originally EWA was to come from a separate source of funds but in the end came out of Prop 204. There were varying opinions as to whether this was appropriate or not. A couple people made the case that the EWA provides ecosystem benefits above and beyond its original intent, and

therefor the ERP would be “double dipping” if the Prop 204 funds were reimbursed.

**Additional potential desired outcome** – Establishment of long-term funding to manage existing lands for habitat values, potentially through endowments.

### **Administrative**

**Bullet one** – “Greater than 80% of ERP staff positions filled.”

No comments.

**Bullet two** – “Ability of ERP to directly manage its administrative responsibilities, including contracting, established.”

Concerns raised about the subcommittee’s role here, especially regarding governance. Some felt the subcommittee did not have a role in influencing developing legislation.

**Bullet three** – “The ERP housed in either a new entity (e.g., Bay-Delta Restoration Trust) or housed under one roof (CDFG, CDFA, USFWS, NMFS and other agency hires housed at CALFED and reporting to the Program Manager).”

More concerns raised about the subcommittee’s role here in relation to governance, especially regarding the reference to a “new entity (e.g. Bay-Delta Restoration Trust)”. Some questioned how the ERP could be housed under one roof with other agency hires reporting to the Program Manager. It was explained that such a situation presently exists within the ERP, with DWR and Reclamation employees reporting to the Program Manager, a Fish and Wildlife Service employee. Other CALFED agency staff work on the ERP but do not report to the Program Manager.

Dan Castleberry agreed to summarize the comments on the document and forward them to the co-chairs. The co-chairs had previously committed to distributing a revised version prior to the next meeting.

### **Other items**

The next Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee meeting is Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 5:00. Agenda items include a report on the look-back exercise; presentation and discussion of the Year 3 Annual Work Plan; and discussion, revision and approval of the Desired Outcomes document. The following Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee meeting was set for September 25<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 to 1:00.

On August 1<sup>st</sup>, the Working Landscapes Subcommittee (new under BDPAC) will meet in the Resources Building Room 1131 from 1:30 to 5:00.

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, the Restoration Fund Roundtable for the Central Valley Project Improvement Act will meet from 9:00 to 3:00 at the Federal Building at 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA.

On August 16<sup>th</sup>, the Reclamation Board meeting will focus on the Comprehensive Study beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the Resources Building Auditorium.

**Action Items**

1. Send meeting summary out to subcommittee members prior to the next meeting, ask subcommittee to review and approve the meeting summary at the start of the next meeting.
2. Revise the draft list of desired outcomes for the Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee based on comments received to date, send revised version to subcommittee members prior to the next meeting, with the goal of approving a revised draft at the next subcommittee meeting.