Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative
CORE GROUP MEETING MINUTES
June 4, 2009
9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
City of San José Watershed Protection Offices, Almaden Conference Room
170 West San Carlos Street, San José, CA 95113

Attendees: Trish Mulvey, Phil Bobel, Larry Johmann, Nancy Bernardi, Melody Tovar, Sandra Freitas, Luisa Valiela (ph), Kristy McCumby (ph), Lorrie Gervin (ph), Roberta Dunlap, and Jill Bicknell (ph).

TIME	TOPIC
9:30 a.m.	Welcome, Introductions, and Early Announcements (Trish Mulvey)
9:40 a.m.	Review Meeting Minutes and Update Action Items from Core Group Meeting on February 13, 2009
9:50 a.m.	WMI Update (Melody Tovar)
10:00 a.m.	Trash Summit Next Steps (Phil Bobel) • Proposed Next Meeting Date
10:15 a.m.	POTW Permit Updates (Phil Bobel, Lorrie Gervin, and Kirsten Struve) • Proposed Next Meeting Date
10:35 a.m.	Stormwater Municipal Regional Permit Update (Melody Tovar)
10:55 a.m.	COS Recommendations on WMI Priorities (Melody Tovar)
11:25 a.m.	Election of SCBMWI Chair (Trish Mulvey)
11:40 a.m.	Open Discussion: Planning SCBWMI Thirteenth Anniversary Party
11:50 a.m.	Plus/Delta and Next Meeting
12:00 p.m.	Adjourn

ACTION ITEMS

#	ACTION ITEMS	ASSIGNED TO	DUE DATE	STATUS
1	Forward WMI Update with Meeting Minutes	Sandra Freitas	June 11, 2009	
2	Forward WMI Update to Jill Bicknell	Sandra Freitas	June 11, 2009	Done
3	Forward Palo Alto NPDES Permit Update to Core Group	Sandra Freitas	June 11, 2009	Done
4	Contact the Santa Clara Valley Water District regarding use	Trish Mulvey/Larry	June 11, 2009	Done

	of ACCESS database for creek concerns	Johmann		
5	Send out Save the Date for Core Meeting and Activity in September	Sandra Freitas	June 11, 2009	Done

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Early Announcements
The San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Program Grant request will be available during the week of June 22nd and due on September 23rd.

2. Review Meeting Minutes and Update Action Items from Core Group Meeting on February 13, 2009
The meeting minutes were approved and action items were completed.

3. WMI Update
A WMI Update handout was provided for input. The Emerging Contaminants Subgroup needs a phrase that describes their partnership with the San Francisco Estuary Institute and the Watershed Education and Outreach Subgroup needs to describe its working relationship with SVURPPP. The commenting period has been extended to the first week of July. An e-mail requesting additional feedback will be sent out to all members with details.

4. Trash Summit Next Steps
The WMI Trash Subgroup will be meeting with Bob Kass on June 25, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. at the City of Campbell City Hall located at 70 North First Street. Discussion items will include the next trash initiative and funding. Mondy Lariz from the Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition (SCCCC) and Jill Bicknell from the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program (SCVURPPP) will be attending.

Trash capture devices may be eligible for the water quality grant that the Environmental Protection Agency is offering. In this grant cycle, funding will be available for actions that accomplish stormwater pollution prevention permit requirements.

5. POTW Permit Updates
The POTW Discussion Forum co-chairs, Phil Bobel and Kirsten Struve (via a handout), provided updates on the NPDES Permit that were just issued for their respective POTWs. Lorrie Gervin provided an update for the Sunnyvale POTW. In this permit cycle, the Water Board worked with POTWs individually, but has not been able to devote resources to the WMI and stakeholder participation during permitting processes.

The following is an update on the status for each of the POTW Permits:

Palo Alto (from handout)
The Regional Water Board unanimously approved a new 5-year discharge permit for the Regional Water Quality Control Plant on April 8, 2009, concluding a yearlong process of submitting applications and pollutant analyses, reviewing and commenting on draft permits, and negotiating key provisions with Regional Water Board staff. The new permit becomes effective on June 1, 2009. The following are a few of the key effluent limit outcomes:

Ammonia: The RWQCP has historically had what are known as "technology-based" effluent limits for ammonia and has not had compliance problems for ammonia. Recently, the Regional Water Board began using a new method for calculating ammonia limits, and they proposed new limits that were much lower than the existing limits and that would probably have led to violations and fines. The new method did not allow dilution and used several conservative assumptions that resulted in limits much lower than needed to protect San Francisco Bay. Through a series of technical memoranda and meetings, we were able to convince the Regional Water Board staff that using a dilution factor for ammonia was scientifically valid and the best option. The new permit has ammonia limits that were calculated with a dilution factor and that are essentially equivalent to the limits in the previous permit. This is the first time (except for cyanide, discussed below) that the Regional Water Board has allowed us a dilution factor. Retaining these higher ammonia limits may prove to be very important as the RWQCPs attempt to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions associated with its biological aeration basin treatment step.

Cyanide: The previous permit had "interim" effluent limits for cyanide because we were unable to meet the very low limits that we would have received 5 years ago. We were unable to meet these limits even though we have a very stringent program of inspections and sampling for industrial facilities that use cyanide in their processes. Since the last permit was issued, we have worked with our Bay Area-wide industry group and with Regional Board Staff to develop updated water quality objectives for San Francisco Bay that are based on species actually found in our region. We also conducted a sampling program at the Baylands that was used to develop a dilution factor just for cyanide. The Regional Water Board adopted both the new water quality objectives and the cyanide dilution factor into the San Francisco Bay Basin Plan, and the changes were approved by the State Water Board and by EPA. The result is that our new permit contains final effluent limits for cyanide that we are able to comply with.

Chlorodibromomethane: Chlorodibromomethane is a disinfection byproduct that is formed when chlorine is used for disinfection. Similar to cyanide, the previous permit had interim limits for chlorodibromomethane because we were unable to meet the final limits that were based on the water quality objectives for the Bay. Unlike cyanide, though, Palo Alto was required to find a way to actually reduce chlorodibromomethane concentrations and come into compliance with the lower final limits. During the last 5 years, we researched disinfection byproduct formation and conducted a series of laboratory bench tests that evaluated the effect of using a different disinfectant, chloramines, in the treatment process. We determined that by adding a small amount of ammonia we could disinfect with chloramines instead of with free chlorine, greatly reducing the formation of byproducts like chlorodibromomethane. This change was introduced in early 2007, and has been very effective. We are now able to easily meet the final limits in the new permit. The new ultraviolet light disinfection facilities that are being built in the next year and a half will reduce the formation of disinfection byproducts even further.

Sunnyvale (from handout)
Sunnyvale recently received a revised tentative order and resulted in issues with the proposed ammonia limitations. They met with Regional Board and reissued permit and included attainable numbers for ammonia –discussions are still taking place.

Ammonia: Chronic toxicity is occurring with ammonia and acute and chronic testing procedures are being administered to the effluent. Very low levels of toxicity have resulted, but staff has been ordered to perform testing twice a month and determine where toxicity is coming from. The POTW

has been experiencing limitations with the testing methodology. Investigations are being performed and additional discussions will take place.

Total Suspended Solids (TSS): TSS are a concern and levels are much more elevated than Palo Alto and San José, which is due to technology based limits. The Water Board would like a special study conducted to reflect a reduction in TSS. In result, a polymer may have to be added to the treatment process, which may impede water quality.

Cyanide: is a bay area wide concern.

Chloride issues and Chlorodibromomethane are bay area wide concerns and chlorine limits have been reduced.

San José/Santa Clara (handout)
The Regional Water Board unanimously approved a new 5-year discharge permit for the Plant on April 8, 2009, concluding a yearlong process of submitting applications and pollutant analyses, reviewing and commenting on draft permits, and negotiating key provisions with Regional Water Board staff. The new permit becomes effective on June 1, 2009. The following are a few of the key outcomes:

Conventional Pollutants and Receiving Water: There were no changes to effluent limits for conventional pollutants (ammonia, BOD, Chlorine residual, Oil and Grease, TSS, Turbidity, pH, Enterococcus, and DO). The Plant did not have reasonable potential for ammonia but received a technology based limit. There were also no changes for toxicity limits.

Priority Pollutants:
Cyanide: City staff worked with Regional Board Staff to develop updated water quality objectives for San Francisco Bay and conducted a sampling program that was used to develop a dilution factor exclusively for cyanide. The Regional Water Board adopted both the new water quality objectives and the cyanide dilution factor into the San Francisco Bay Basin Plan, and the changes were approved by the State Water Board and by EPA. The result is that the new permit contains final effluent limits for cyanide that do not pose a compliance issue. A cyanide action plan is required.

Copper, Nickel, and Mercury: Plant's work on developing site specific objectives has resulted in limits that can be consistently met. The new permit includes the regional Copper Management strategy. Mercury is regulated through the regional watershed permit.

Dioxin: The Plant received a 10-Year Compliance schedule and interim limit for dioxin. This is the first time dioxin was included in the permit. The dioxin water quality standard is at a level that can not yet be accurately measured using SIP guidelines, therefore, the interim limit is 4,500 times the water quality standard.

Heptachlor and Tributyltin: Limits were included for Heptachlor and tributyltin. Several other organics that were regulated in the last permit were not included for this permit because they had not been detected in Plant effluent in the past five years, resulting in fewer pollutant limits overall.

Flow: The 120 million gallons per day (mgd) average dry-weather effluent flow trigger remains, as do requirements for avian botulism response and reporting and salt marsh vegetative assessments

twice during the permit cycle (2010 and 2012). Annual reporting of the South Bay Action Plan programs is required.

Collection System Requirements

The permit for the first time includes the collection systems of San Jose and Santa Clara, the co-owners of the Plant.

The POTW Forum will be meeting on July 8, 2009 from at 10:30 to 12:00 p.m. at the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant. Agenda items will include master planning, the permit, product stewardship linkages, and recycled water.

6. Stormwater Municipal Regional Permit Updates

Melody Tovar from San José provided an update on the Municipal Regional Permit for Stormwater. A Public Hearing took place on May 13, 2009 with more than 70 people providing testimony. Water Boar members expressed the need for additional revisions to the sections on, new development and trash reductions. The permit goals include specifics in one permit rather than individual management plans; provide consistent, accountable, and flexible goals; and provide opportunity for collaboration. Jurisdictions have provided comments to the permit and the next steps (from the Board) include: document responses to comments, provide further revisions in response to comments, stakeholder follow-up, and conclude with an adoption hearing. The Water Board staff had been planning for adoption in July but that will be delayed to the fall.

7. COS Recommendations on WMI Priorities

The COS Subgroup met in May and discussed a potential Core Group retreat, but decided to more informally propose revised current priorities. The Trash and Product Stewardship Subgroups are in demand and there are great energies that will keep efforts moving forward. The Erosive Forces objectives have little recent activity and can be folded into the Stream Goals priority. Workshops and agency briefings and development Stream Goals program objectives are in abeyance pending further development of the San Francisco Estuary Institute prospectus and funding of proposed workshops. The Core group concurred to renumber the priorities. Below is the new list:

- Trash
- Product Stewardship
- Stream Goals

The group also speculated about other priorities that may have not been considered, such as climate change. Climate change is important but we do not know what type of added value WMI can contribute at this time; however, it has a home in the POTW Forum in considering both “waste to energy “ options and planning for sea level rise. Salinity control for recycled water could be another WMI priority option, but there may not be capacity in the WMI to address this concern, and we will await word on “next steps” for developing the salinity and nutrient management plans called for by 2013 in the new Recycled Water Policy of the State Water Resources Control Board

Larry Johmann expressed interest in the Santa Clara Valley Water District’s ACCESS database which residents can utilize to report concerns about creeks. Larry recently paddled out in Coyote Creek and noticed potential for water flow blockages from downed trees. There is concern for jurisdiction, ownership and follow-up relating to concerns in waterways when the site is not District property. Stakeholders would like to see the Water District engaged in this discussion, and Trish

Mulvey and Larry Johmann will follow-up with District staff, and Phil Bobel will contact Frank Maitski and Marc Klemencic.

8. Election of SCBWMI Chair
Trish Mulvey and Melody Tovar were nominated to serve another year. The Coordinator role will remain as is with San Jose for the coming fiscal year but will be rotated to another agency beginning in July 2010; and members are being asked to revisit their budgets to support this role.

9. Open Discussion: Planning SCBWMI Thirteenth Anniversary Party
This year's party will include a meeting at the Roosevelt Community Center, a potluck in the Roosevelt Park, and a boat tour of Coyote Creek. Larry Johmann offered to contact Marley Spilman of the Friends of Coyote Creek for boat launching into the Coyote Creek (Spilman's property backs up into Coyote Creek). Meeting and activity details will be provided in a separate e-mail. The meeting will take place on September 3, 2009 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

10. Plus/Delta and Next Meeting: September 3, 2009
The next meeting will begin a the Roosevelt Community Center located at 901 East Santa Clara Street, San José, 95116, and will end up in the park for a picnic The day will include a boat tour of Coyote Creek in downtown San José.

Phil Bobel will organize a potluck. Larry Johmann will contact Marley Spilman (to launch boats), and Sandra Freitas will reserve a meeting room at the Roosevelt Community Center.

11. Adjourned at 11:50 a.m.