

Science Advisory Group Summary and Response

October 20-21, 2010

Their Meeting Agenda

- Why the State wants biological objectives
- Role and charge to the Group
- History of bioassessment in California
- Workplan Overview
- Workplan specifics
 - Task by task detailed descriptions

The Science Advisory Group

- **Chuck Hawkins** (Utah State Univ) - Chair
- **David Buchwalter** (Univ of North Carolina)
- **Rick Hafele** (State of Oregon)
- **Chris Konrad** (US Geological Survey/ The Nature Conservancy)
- **Dan Mosley** (Pyramid Lake Tribe)
- **LeRoy Poff** (Colorado State Univ)
- **John Van Sickle** (US EPA Office of Research & Development)
- **Lester Yuan** (US EPA Office of Standards and Technology)

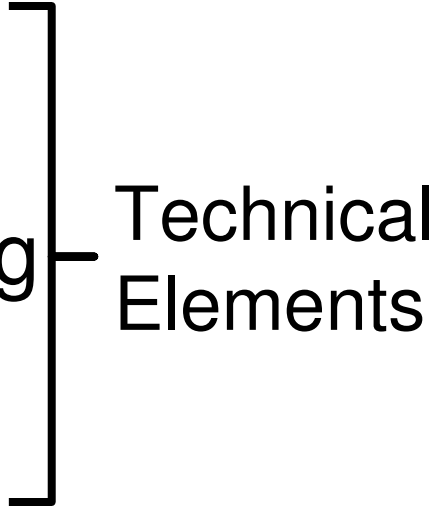
THE CHARGE

- Provide independent technical review of policy development products
 - Includes the workplan and individual tasks
- Provide critical scientific insight
 - Data gaps, alternative approaches, limits of interpretation
 - Potential management implications
- Provide guidance for science team and the State
 - Thought process, feasibility of application, alert to unforeseen roadblocks

CHALLENGE FOR THE DAY

- Review the workplan
- Did we use a sound technical approach?
- Are the technical activities appropriate to achieve the stated goals?
- Are there additional tasks we need to consider?

Workplan Overview

- Reference condition
 - Stressor response models
 - Waterbody classification and scoring
 - Stressor identification
 - Information management
 - Implementation Plan Development
 - Rulemaking
 - Outreach
 - Training and standardization
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- Technical Elements

Workplan Summary

TASK	GOAL
Reference Condition	Identify biogeographic regions, set biological expectations for reference sites
Stressor-Response Model	Set biological expectations for non-reference sites
Waterbody Classification	Assign biological expectations to every waterbody
Stressor Identification	Provide guidance for when bio-objectives are not achieved
Information Management	Transparent and standardized way to submit, store, access, and analyze bioassessment data

Developing biological objectives for perennial wadeable streams in the State of California

Review of Workplan
Scientific Advisory Group
21 October 2010

Overall Comments

Science team is to be commended for this effort to advance biocriteria development.

General comments on approach

- Explicit recognition of policy context for science team decisions in approach
 - suggest more interaction between science team and policy and stakeholder groups (e.g., to clarify objectives and to anticipate implementation issues).
- Clarify language/definition of terms to facilitate communication within team and between groups
- Identify specific goals for establishing biological criteria and how this approach will attain those goals
 - e.g., describe how criteria will protect high quality streams and set reasonable expectations for degraded systems

Comments on Task 1 (Reference Conditions)

- Continue to refine reference network to capture natural gradients within and among regions.
- Clarify screening process for reference sites and work towards greater objectivity.
- Define “reference” condition and use consistently

Comments on Task 2

(Stressor-Response Models)

- Change the name of this task to represent goal (e.g. best attainable conditions given human landscape)
- Check with regulatory group about variable criteria for single designated uses.
- Consider using this approach to inform traditional criteria setting (i.e., percentiles of reference)

- *A priori* selection of variables for non-controllable human effect axis with input from stakeholders and regulators.
- Identify pros and cons of binning vs. continuous models
- Choose biological variables that are important for programmatic goals rather than on statistical criteria
- Many questions about using this approach, use a pilot study to demonstrate its feasibility

Comments on Task 3 (Waterbody Classification)

- Regionalization scheme
- Many questions that will probably be answered as part of Task 2
- Pros and cons binning

For the Next Science Advisory Group Meeting

- Presentation of reference condition assessment
- Progress report on Pilot Study
 - Reference gradients
 - Assess stressor response modeling approaches
 - Evaluation of waterbody classification schemes
- Methods standardization