

WaterTAP Advisory Group Charter

Purpose / Introduction

This document provides the protocols and guidelines for the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board) administration of the Water Technical Access Portal (WaterTAP) Advisory Group.

Background

California public water systems are required to report information to the Division of Drinking Water (DDW) including water quality monitoring data, operational data, compliance information, inventory information, financial information, and more. This information provides the foundation for data-driven public health and safety decisions. The State's legacy drinking water data systems are unable to: effectively collect high-quality drinking water data, streamline and guide public water system reporters through the reporting process, ensure open and transparent public access to drinking water information, and support data driven decision making.

The Water Technical Access Portal (WaterTAP) is intended to modernize the Water Board's drinking water data ecosystem and remedy the impacts of its aging data system; improve data processes; advance the State's ability to collect, manage, and provide drinking water data to the public; and support consistent and transparent decision-making. WaterTAP is intended to be an enterprise-level data system to address drinking water information needs of the Water Board's Division of Drinking Water. This overarching architecture is intended to connect existing foundational data systems, integrate new data systems currently utilized by the State, and eliminate others by subsuming their functions. WaterTAP is conceived to be the main data system used by water systems, the public, and DDW as a single cohesive system to streamline information access.

In accordance with the Water Board's commitment to engaging impacted communities, stakeholders, California Native American Tribes, and the public in its decision-making processes and projects, the WaterTAP Advisory Group is therefore convened to engage with experts and interested parties who are willing to lend their skills, guidance, and knowledge to help the Water Board achieve the goals of the WaterTAP project.

Relationship of the Group to the Water Board

The WaterTAP Advisory Group (Group) is a consultative body that offers advice to Water Board staff on the WaterTAP project. The Group is not authorized to approve any project materials or make policy decisions regarding the project. It is the role and sole prerogative of the Water Board to make final decisions regarding the project.

Membership

- 1) **Membership Composition:** The Group consists of no more than 22 members. To the extent possible, the Deputy Director of the Division of Drinking Water or their designee will select participants so that:
 - a. Total number of members: Up to 22 members
 - i. Evenly distributed among the listed groups/criteria as possible.
 - b. Appointments provide geographic balance throughout the State.
 - c. Appointments provide a balance of different public water system interests that will interact with the future data system (e.g., public water system representatives with different sizes, complexity, or governance structure).

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- d. Appointments provide a balance of the different public water system data users (e.g., governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, or academia).
 - i. Appointments to provide a balance of needs and priorities of communities most impacted by our work.
 - e. In order to provide balance, appointments may include the following representatives:
 - i. One representative of a California Native American Tribe
 - ii. Nine representatives of a community water system
 - 1. Three small community water system representatives (e.g., <200 service connections)
 - 2. Three medium community water system representatives (e.g., 201 – 1,000 service connections)
 - 3. Three large community water system representatives (e.g., >1,000 service connections)
 - iii. Three representatives of non-community water systems
 - iv. Three representatives of a non-governmental organization
 - v. Two contract operators
 - vi. One drinking water accredited laboratory
 - vii. Two academic/research community/data experts
- 2) **Duration of Advisory Group:** Group members are appointed by the Deputy Director of the Division of Drinking Water or their designee. Members serve for the duration of the project, expected to be two – three years.
- 3) **Meeting Frequency:** Meetings are expected to be twice a year, although additional meetings may be necessary as determined by the Group.
- 4) **Compensation and Expenses:** Meetings will be held virtually so compensation of travel expenses or other costs associated with participating in meetings will not be provided. No compensation will be provided for preparing for or attending meetings and all time spent as part of the advisory group will be voluntary.
- 5) **Member Responsibilities:**
- a. Members are expected to attend all meetings and contact the Group Coordinator if an absence is expected. Member alternates and proxies are not allowed.
 - b. Members may resign at any time by notifying the Group Coordinator in writing.
 - c. Members may be terminated due to excessive absences if two consecutive meetings are missed. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis due to serious illness or other circumstances as deemed acceptable by the Deputy Director of the Division of Drinking Water or their designee. Terminations under this section are at the discretion of the Deputy Director of Drinking Water or their designee.
 - d. Members will maintain compliance with applicable ethics and conflict of interest laws, including Government Code section 87104.
 - e. Members will provide timely feedback on WaterTAP-related items when requested. Feedback will generally be collected during Group meetings so Members should be prepared by reviewing any preparatory materials sent in advance of the meeting.

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- f. Water Board staff may request feedback on items outside of a scheduled Group meeting (e.g., to test software functionality). Parts a and c of this subsection (i.e., the attendance requirements) do not apply to these additional requests.

Procedural Rules

- 1) Meetings: At least two official Group meetings are expected to be held each year. Official meetings will be between 2 – 4 hours long depending on the complexity of the agenda. These meetings are not subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act (Article 9 (commencing with Section 11120) of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code). However, the meetings will be open to the public and publicly noticed. Water Board staff may request additional voluntary meetings with the Group in addition to the official meetings.
- 2) Meeting Materials: Water Board staff will prepare meeting agendas and associated meeting materials. If Group members wish to prepare materials to present at a meeting, the materials must be submitted in final form to the Group Coordinator at least five business days in advance of the meeting. The Group Coordinator may request changes to the material prior to the meeting or the materials may be rejected from the agenda.
- 3) Meeting Locations: Meetings will be held virtually. Water Board staff will identify remote participation platforms.
- 4) Facilitation: Water Board staff will facilitate Group meetings.
- 5) Quorum: A quorum does not apply to this Group.

Advisory Group meeting minutes, resources, materials, or other related documents and files will be recorded for each meeting and stored on the public facing WaterTAP webpage, available here: https://waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/programs/watertap/.

Meeting / Feedback Protocols

- 1) Meeting Guidelines: The following meeting guidelines encourage productive deliberation:
 - a. Listen actively and do not interrupt others.
 - b. Speak briefly and allow everyone to participate.
 - c. Respect each other and disagree without being disagreeable.
 - d. Prepare for each meeting.
 - e. Attend each meeting or review the video of the meeting if unable to attend.
 - f. Honor the agenda and support meeting start and end times. Members will do their best to follow the guidelines and give Water Board staff the authority to enforce the guidelines; act in good faith in all aspects of Group deliberations; and conduct themselves in a manner that promotes joint problem-solving, collaboration, and consideration of the input and viewpoints of other participants.
- 2) Group Comments: Members provide constructive advice and feedback on the WaterTAP Project and other key aspects of drinking water data. The Group does not develop consensus recommendations or majority opinions. Water Board staff will consider all comments from Members and the public including areas of agreement and disagreement. Group comments are advisory to the Water Board and are implemented at the Water Board's discretion