

State of California  
Regional Water Quality Control Board  
San Diego Region

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT  
APRIL 15, 2015

- ITEM: 7
- SUBJECT: Update on Implementation of the Practical Vision (David Gibson)
- PURPOSE: To brief the board members on accomplishments and lessons learned from implementing the Practical Vision in 2014, on the Practical Vision Operational Plan for 2015, and to get feedback on regional priorities and goals for 2015.
- RECOMMENDATION(S): This is an informational item. There is no recommendation.
- KEY ISSUES:
1. The first calendar year of implementing the Practical Vision saw many important accomplishments.
  2. Early input from Board members on priorities and projects for 2015 is important for successful implementation of the Practical Vision.
  3. Successful Implementation of the Practical Vision as well as the programmatic work of the Board requires annual planning, tracking, and reporting.
- PRACTICAL VISION: This item provides a progress report on the first year of implementing the Practical Vision. This item also demonstrates the San Diego Water Board values of communication and transparency by reporting in an open meeting our 2014 accomplishments, and our regional priorities and goals for 2015. Finally, this item demonstrates our value of leadership in that it is a first of its kind, and offers the Board members early input on the regional priorities and goals of the agency for 2015.
- DISCUSSION: December 2014 saw the end of our first full calendar year of implementing the San Diego Water Board's 7-year strategic plan, the Practical Vision. The Practical Vision is a tool for culture change at the San Diego Water Board; the means to achieve healthy waters through collaboration, reliance on the latest science, prioritization of issues and actions, and prudent use of authorities in service to the people of California.

This agenda item itself is an example of culture change at this agency and demonstrates our commitment to the values of transparency, communication, and leadership. Every year, we report a handful of major accomplishments to the State Water Board (for the list, see Supporting Document 1), but have not provided Board members and the public with a more comprehensive briefing. This item is the first detailed accomplishments briefing provided to the San Diego Water Board by an executive officer at a public meeting that I am aware of. This item also gives Board members an opportunity to provide early input on regional priorities and goals for 2015. I intend to make this an annual event.

To bring the Practical Vision to life and keep it from collecting dust on the shelf, we created our first annual Operational Plan during the first quarter of 2014. The Operational Plan laid out the selected projects from the Practical Vision that we implemented in 2014, and identified staffing, resources, tasks, and milestones for each project.

A list of agency accomplishments for 2014 is found in Supporting Document 1. The Practical Vision projects from 2014 that I will highlight in my oral briefing are:

- The unified southern Orange County beach water quality monitoring program;
- The community outreach strategy that produced a resolution on prioritizing Cleanup and Abatement Account grant requests and supplemental environmental projects based on environmental justice and wetland restoration considerations;
  - The binational Tijuana River Valley Summit;
  - The on-boarding new employees initiative;
- The wetland summit at the August Board meeting; and
- The San Diego Bay bioaccumulation and risk evaluation studies.

An important lesson learned from 2014 is that we need to merge our Practical Vision projects with our programmatic work to clearly set expectations and ensure adequate staffing and budgeting for successful outcomes in both arenas. The 2015 Operational Plan takes this into account by including programmatic work that is linked to performance targets and other workplan commitments made to the State Water Board that aren't specifically called out in the Practical Vision. This has required an extra degree of prioritizing, planning, and budgeting on the part of your managers to create the Operational Plan. My oral briefing will highlight the following programmatic projects for 2015:

- Enrollment of Orange County municipalities in the Regional MS4 permit, and the creation and approval of water quality improvement plans for the San Diego County MS4 copermittees;
- The Naval Base Coronado NPDES Permit;
- WDRs for commercial agricultural and nursery operations;
- Basin Plan amendments to raise the nitrate groundwater quality objective in specific basins, and to interpret the California Toxics Rule criteria for copper and zinc in Chollas Creek using a site-specific water effects ratio;
- The Tijuana River Valley Recovery 5-Year Action Plan; and
- Records of decision for a number of Department of Defense cleanup sites.

I'll also highlight the following Practical Vision projects for 2015:

- Wetlands Restoration Project;
- Biological Objectives in the Basin Plan;
- Strategy for a Healthy San Diego Bay;

- Adoption of a reach of the San Diego River for cleanup, maintenance, and monitoring; and
- San Diego River Watershed Condition Report Card.

Finally, I will discuss other efforts that do not fit neatly into the traditional programmatic concept of water quality restoration and protection. These include:

- Ongoing efforts of the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team and the Five Year Action Plan;
- Community outreach and environmental justice; and
- Drought conditions, water supply short fall, and how the San Diego Water Board can assist in ensuring a reliable and sustainable local water supply.

The projects include development of measures (e.g., development of Biological Objectives and the San Diego River Watershed Condition Report Card) to facilitate the shift from activities to environmental outcomes and how we are asking the right questions in our programmatic tasks through the lens of the Practical Vision.

LEGAL CONCERNS: None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS 1. Practical Vision and Program Accomplishments for 2014

PUBLIC NOTICE: This item was publicly noticed in the Meeting Notice and Agenda for the April 15, 2015 meeting.