

**Beaches and Creeks TMDL Cost-Benefit Analysis
Steering Committee Meeting
May 17, 2016**

Committee Members Present

Jimmy Smith, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Jeremy Haas, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Ruth Kolb, City of San Diego, Storm Water and Transportation
Todd Snyder, County of San Diego, Watershed Protection Program
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Jian Peng, County of Orange, Water Quality Planning

Supporting Roles

Lewis Michaelson, Katz & Associates
Bree Robertoy, Katz & Associates
Michelle Mata, San Diego Regional Quality Control Board
Cynthia Gorham, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
Jo Ann Weber, County of San Diego
Ken Schiff, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
Mark Buckley, Eco Northwest
Chad Praul, Environmental Incentives
Jeremy Sokulsky, Environmental Incentives

Consultant Presentation and CBA Discussion [M. Buckley]

General Approach

- Using the most rigorous methods is key. The cost-benefit analysis (CBA) will draw from sophisticated, peer-reviewed information.
- Should the CBA break the boundaries of standard economic analysis to look at equity and impacts?
 - J. Haas: We need to distinguish between different ideas of clean water benefits. The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (SDRWQCB) is concerned with waters that are safe to swim. Municipalities are concerned with economic impacts.
 - T. Snyder: Elected officials look at values, equity and impacts. This CBA will be used to determine if the current regulations are reasonable and to obtain funding by demonstrating benefits. At its core, the REC-1 Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is a public health standard, so public health should be front and center. Then, the CBA should look at additional benefits. The information should be discrete enough to separate.
 - R. Hutsel: The term ‘public health’ needs to be clarified.
 - T. Snyder: It should be defined by the standards of the regulation.
 - R. Hutsel: Public health should be defined more broadly as quality of life (e.g., avoiding the water because of fear of illness and property values).
 - T. Snyder: There’s a value in quantifying these things. Decisions can then be made regarding how to use the information.

- J. A. Weber is to provide a map of the study area to the consultant.
 - R. Hutsel: The study area map should be brought to the committee at the next meeting.
 - J. Smith: The area should only include the water bodies and watersheds that are covered in the TMDL. However, it should not be limited to people who live in these areas, it should include visitors as well.
- What are the policy decisions that will be informed by the CBA?
 - T. Snyder: It may impact the Triennial Review – specifically regarding decisions about creating separate wet and dry weather regulations, adjusting schedules, and/or establishing an approach that includes waste water management.
 - J. Haas: The CBA will inform funding decisions and impact how TMDLs would be rewritten. SDRWQCB is expecting to take the results of all studies, including scientific studies, and develop recommendations.
 - R. Kolb: The CBA needs to be transparent and understandable so municipalities can use it to show the need for fee increases.
- R. Hutsel: The San Diego River Park Foundation wants to ensure fresh water is not forgotten in the study.
- J. Smith: The CBA should analyze not just whether what is being asked of the copermitees is too much, but also whether it is enough.

Valuation and Data Collection

- The CBA will include an analysis of supply and demand sources, including how many people are using something and how they use it.
- The study can be weak if it transfers value from another area where it is not comparable.
- There is good federal guidance for user-day data. One day will be based on an eight-hour timeframe.
- The consultant will need to gather data to identify user days by activity and number of trips.
- The consultant already has expenditure data.
- Is the consultant allowed to obtain data independently of the committee?
 - T. Snyder: Yes, but data should be brought to the committee to be vetted before being used in the CBA. The primary concern would be if a group had an estimate that wasn't justified.
 - The story the consultant tells when soliciting data from sources needs to be non-precedential and nonbiased.
- R. Hutsel – How will the consultant ensure the data are as comprehensive as possible?
 - The consultants will reach out to as many sources as possible and review literature. The committee can help identify any data that are missing.
- Committee members should send benefit and cost data suggestions to the consultant directly and copy J. A. Weber and M. Mata on the email.
- J. Haas: How are uses forecasted?
 - A variety of data will be used, including population forecasts, regional activity-specific forecasts, climate change trends, and changes in preference depending on water quality. The America time-use survey can be used to look at the proportion of time spent on activities depending on the quality in the area.

- T. Snyder: How will cost estimates be established for elements for which studies are in development (e.g., wastewater sharing costs)?
 - M. Buckley: Assumptions may need to be made based on a panel of experts or the next best available data. The process will be as transparent as possible.
- T. Snyder: The source of human pathogens will not be addressed by focusing solely on storm water.
 - J. Smith: The SDRWQCB agrees looking at human sources is important, but if the data are not available (e.g., costs of relocating homeless camps), we need to move on.
 - C. Praul: These data can be pulled from an expert.
- K. Schiff – The surfer health study has screening level data.
- J. Smith: All cost estimates need to be reviewed by the consultant for validity as part of the scope of work.
- J. Smith: Incremental costs need to be teased out for bacterial load reduction.
- R. Kolb: The City of San Diego can provide data related to the number of visitors to the beach.
- R. Hutsel: The consultants should obtain data from fishing groups.

Project Management

Meetings and Communication

- Chad: Meeting once a month may not be enough. How can the committee be reached to provide helpful direction between meetings?
 - Items that require approval can be sent via email to the full steering committee with a 72-hour time stamp. If anyone is uncomfortable with the decision not going before the committee at a meeting, they can pull it.
 - J. Smith: All committee members need to be involved in important decisions. Some minor decisions could be made by just one member.
 - R. Kolb: Conference calls are possible, if needed.
- Can the consultant reach out to individual committee members for data?
 - Yes.

Work Plan Schedule

- The consultant will meet with the steering committee twice before presenting to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC will have one week to review the work plan before the presentation.
- Should a public workshop be held on August 5?
 - R. Hutsel: It's too late to present something to people and ask for comments. Public comments may not be necessary on a work plan.
 - Jeremy: A decision needs to be made by June 6.
 - J.A. Weber: The workshop could be pushed to a later date to provide time for review.
- J. Smith: An extra steering committee meeting or two is fine to get the work plan right.
- J. Sokulsky: Are longer meetings possible?
 - Yes.
- J. Sokulsky: It would take some work to reform the work plan to make it understandable to the public, and another steering committee meeting would be required.
- M. Mata: So, is this a realistic schedule?

- M. Buckley: It's aggressive, but doable. The schedule may have to shift if a primary data survey is required.

Steering Committee Business

- A draft Memorandum of Understanding was circulated and signed. It includes a commitment to look at analyzing current conditions as a baseline in order to show change (not a no-action alternative).
- The committee was reminded that the charter includes a 60 percent vote to reach approval when formal votes are taken.
- If any committee members have concerns about the process, Lewis Michaelson, the facilitator, can be reached offline.