

State Water Resources Control Board

Meeting Minutes
Clean Beaches Task Force
February 25, 2013
Southern California Coastal Water Research Project, Costa Mesa
9:00am to 4:30pm

Attendance

Members present

- Alexandria Boehm*
- Chris Crompton
- John Dorsey
- Mark Gold
- Jack Gregg*
- Amanda Griesbach
- Monica Mazur
- Charles McGee
- James Rasmus*
- George Robertson
- Brandon Steets
- Guangyu Wang
- Steve Weisberg

Members absent

- Sarah Allen
- Eugene Bromley
- Mark Carr
- Patricia Holden
- Jennifer Jay
- Steve Leiker
- Richard Lichtenfels
- Mark McPherson
- Dean Peterson
- Peter Raimondi
- John Ricker
- Mary Small

Other parties present

- Rachid Ait-Lasri
- Spencer Joplin
- Leslie Laudon
- Patricia Leary
- Katie McNeill*
- Andrew Tsiu

*attended by conference call

Agenda

Time	Item
9:00	Introductions. Review/amend agenda and rules.
9:15	Review detailed implementation applications from Round 1; Make recommendations for follow-up.
11:00	Review implementation concept proposals from Round 2; Recommend projects to invite for detailed applications.
11:30	Discuss BMP effectiveness assessment for CBI projects.
12:00	Lunch
12:30	Review detailed research applications from Round 1; Make recommendations for follow-up.

2:30	Review Research Priorities
3:30	Plan Round 3 of Solicitation. Develop strategy to promote CBI projects at the highest priority beaches.
4:00	Plan next meeting and adjourn.

Round 1 implementation detailed proposals

Two implementation detailed proposals were received. The CBTF members discussed these proposals and made the following recommendations.

Proposal 24663: VSS BMPs and Low Flow Diversions of Storm Drains Discharging to San Pedro Bay Beaches

The CBTF recommended that State Water Board award a grant to implement this proposal. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

VSS may be more costly a solution than would be necessary for this application; however the applicant already has VSS units, and standard infrastructure saves money through less training and spare parts. The pre-filter likely is a condition of discharging to the sewer. For comparison, Los Angeles City flow diversions have trash filters before going into system.

How much sediment and trash is expected? How much sediment could the VSS unit capture? What are the applicant's predominant LFD designs?

Proposal 24672: Santa Cruz Noble Gulch Trunk Line Relocation

The CBTF recommended that State Water Board award a grant to implement this proposal. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

The applicant has a regulatory obligation to make sewer improvements, but a grant would accelerate this project. The full grant should be offered, but applicant should be told that in the future, the task force may limit the total grant amount allotted to an agency. Therefore, the applicant should be sure they want to spend \$1.5 million on this project while funds will be needed at Cowell Beach. The applicant has a good record of administrating grants.

Other proposals

The CBTF was informed of the status of the remaining proposals where applicants were invited to submit a detailed application, but have not yet done so. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members during discussions of the specified proposals.

Proposal 24745: Santa Cruz- Reduce Sources of Bacteria at Cowell Beach and Main Beach

Lining the storm drain is premature and should not be funded by CBI. Pipes should be inspected and cleaned, and sources should be investigated before lining. Project components that should be funded include installing gates and hatches to facilitate access to the storm drains, and inspection and cleaning the pipes. Seasonal monitoring should not be funded.

Proposal 24693: Ballona Creek Water Quality Improvement and Beneficial Use Project

The Task Force believes this project needs to be implemented with or without funding assistance. The applicant should be given two weeks to submit a detailed proposal or risk losing CBI funding.

Round 2 implementation conceptual proposals

Six concept proposals were received by the January 31, 2013 due date. The CBTF members discussed these proposals and made the following recommendations.

Proposal 25410: Marina Del Rey- Parking Lot 11 Retrofit at Mothers Beach

The CBTF recommended that the applicant not be invited to submit a detailed application. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

This proposal did not contain a proposed BMP design, but instead proposed a design task as part of the project. As a result, the proposal could not explain how the BMPs would improve the beach water quality. CEQA has not started. The project is not ready to proceed. A previous water circulation project pushes polluted water toward this parking lot area.

Proposal 25415: Santa Barbara Wastewater Main Rehabilitation Project

The CBTF recommended that State Water Board staff invite the applicant to submit a detailed application. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

The proposal likely would improve beach water quality only if work is focused on sewers near the coast. The project should focus on areas near the coast. Adequate justification would be needed to show that the inland project areas will improve the beach water quality. It is not clear whether the proposal would monitor the condition of the sewer pipes for years 2 and 3 or only for year 1. A detailed application should include a more detailed map and supporting source identification results. Only the first year of improvements should be funded, and the scope should be limited to the Laguna Channel watershed.

Legal action by Channelkeeper compelled the applicant to consent to a decree that required the applicant to maintain the sewer infrastructure. The applicant already was responsible for maintaining its infrastructure, so the project would be completed with or without CBI funding. However, funding the project would expedite the project and its water quality improvement.

Proposal 25417: Devereux Slough and Sands Beach Watershed Project

The CBTF recommended that the applicant not be invited to submit a detailed application. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

There is not adequate water quality data to demonstrate a problem at Sands Beach. There also is not enough data to support the project as an effective solution for beach pollution.

Restoration of Devereux Slough generally is desirable, but the proposal did not discuss the effects of restoring wetlands on the beach. The project may have more effect during wet weather than dry weather because the wetland would resist flow and filter the pollutants. Restoring wetlands may cause wildlife populations to increase, which could exacerbate the problem. The proposed low impact development is only appropriate for developed areas, not wetlands.

The costs of planning, administration, and outreach are expensive relative to the budget for construction elements. CEQA is not complete and likely would delay implementation.

Proposal 25426: Laguna Beach- Mountain and Gaviota Nuisance Water Diversions

The CBTF recommended that the applicant not be invited to submit a detailed application. However, the CBTF would be interested in a revised concept proposal if the applicant can address the CBTF comments. Steve Weisberg volunteered to be a liaison to the applicant for this purpose. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

Monitoring locations are too far from the discharge points for the data to support the presence of a water quality problem. Beach closures at those locations were caused by acute sewage spills. Flow may not discharge on all days.

The outcome of the previous diversion projects was not available and could have supported the proposal. The discharge points subject to the proposal were not problematic enough circa 2009, when the other diversions were constructed. A revised concept proposal should describe how the importance of the proposed diversions has changed.

The strategy of total diversion is sound, but diversions (and separators) should only be funded by CBI where there is a fecal pollution problem at an impacted beach.

Proposal 25451: Mill Valley- Miller Avenue Sewer Infrastructure Repair

The CBTF recommended that the applicant not be invited to submit a detailed application. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

There is no beach on Richardson Bay, and the area is not on the CBI priority list of beaches. The Project relates to the pathogen TMDL for Richardson Bay, but it does not implement the TMDL.

Proposal 25453: Santa Barbara- LID Stormwater Infiltration Project

The CBTF recommended that the applicant not be invited to submit a detailed application. The following is a summary of comments made by the CBTF:

The proposal is nearly identical to the proposal submitted by Santa Barbara in the Round 1 applications. The applicant did not resolve issues raised by the CBTF on the original proposal.

Round 1 research detailed applications

Four research detailed proposals were received. The CBTF members discussed these applications and made the following recommendations.

Proposal 24692: Determination of DNA-based Fecal Marker Aging Characteristics for use in Quantitative Microbial Source Tracking

The CBTF recommended that State Water Board award a grant for this project. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

A committee of about 6 people should develop guidelines for using research. These guidelines should be designed to prevent mis-application by potentially biased users. Emphasize limitations to the model, and connect the decay model to the source identification protocol, which could become a cookbook for health agencies. Research needs to be distinguished from policy development.

This project would be useful to prioritize beaches based on human sources, which could help accelerate source abatement. The project would also help develop the source identification protocol in order to distinguish between human and non-human sources and to evaluate effectiveness of BMPs.

Recommend changes to Task 4. The model doesn't consider the distance to the source or other infrastructure. Be clear with the limitations to the decay model and include SIPP methods by investigating sewers, storm drains, and spill data so the model outcome will have utility to beach managers. The scope should be distributed to CBTF members for review before execution.

Proposal 24689: Autonomous Systems for Monitoring Beach Water Quality

The CBTF recommended that State Water Board award a grant for this project. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

A mobile sample processor would be useful for responding to spills, analyzing samples from remote locations, monitoring freshwater bodies, monitoring from buoys, providing early warnings, testing mixing zones of established discharges, and implementing TMDLs.

The proposed mobile sample processor would be able to analyze 4 samples in about 1.5 hours. The goal of the project is to develop qPCR technology that can provide a rapid response in analyzing qPCR markers and MST. This sample processor would be engineered to eventually be manufactured for sale for about \$100,000.

The Project needs to keep up with advancing technology. Equipment should be updated to meet technical advances. One recommended change to the scope of work is to better explain Task 1 by describing the digital qPCR method and the advantages it has in terms of flexibility/adaptability. In particular, emphasizing that digital qPCR would increase precision and accuracy, which would enable faster alerts and eliminate the need for a standard curve would clarify the advantages of the mobile sample processor, and justify the engineering requirements described in Task 1.

Proposal 24730: Use of QMRA to Inform Site-Specific Water Quality Objectives for Recreational Waters

The CBTF recommended that State Water Board staff request management direction on whether or not to award a grant for this project. The following is a summary of comments made by the CBTF members:

There was much disagreement among the task force about whether the project should proceed, and how to select a beach on which to conduct a QMRA if the project was funded. The big question is whether there is an appropriate beach that has FIB contamination and that has adequately addressed all/most human sources to declare them inconsequential. This project originally proposed to complete a QMRA in Mission Bay, but human sources were found and the beach was dropped from consideration. The Scope of Work now proposes to select a beach through a Project Advisory Committee (PAC), and then proceed with the QMRA. Some of the task force supported this approach because they believe we need to explore the use of QMRA as a tool before EPA issues guidance on how to do it; whereas other task force members expressed the opinion that there is no beach that has FIB problems that does not have human source(s) left to fix, and they did not support a QMRA for QMRA sake.

In order to resolve the issues, State Water Board staff will request management direction to determine whether funding this Project is appropriate at this time.

Proposal 24702: An epidemiologic study of health risks associated with surfing in wet and dry weather in Southern California

Due to the small number of CBTF members present without a conflict of interest in the project, the remaining CBTF members present requested that State Water Board staff ask the absent CBTF members by email whether this proposal should be invited to submit a detailed application, with at least 2 weeks given for replies. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

This proposal would cost 25% of the research budget. It is uncertain whether the results are worth the proposal's cost. The results could be used to better estimate health risks, which could help guide future funding.

The effect of wet weather would likely be comparable to the effects of background variability, so the experiment would need to be carefully controlled. The ideal study participant is loyal to one beach, but surfers often utilize multiple beaches. The proposal would have to account for this.

Most research (and implementation) projects have targeted dry weather because these projects' effects are more predictable and more easily measureable. Potential dry-weather projects are becoming scarce.

A pilot study should be considered. This proposal's approach differs from other epidemiology studies because surfers tend to use the beach frequently. The proposal would require both off-shore and on-shore sampling.

Research priorities

The CBTF discussed the research priorities and possible topics for future research. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

Appendix D of CBI Guidelines will need to be revised to add new research priorities and identify priorities that have projects funded to address them.

A Wet Weather BMP Effectiveness Study was recommended to be added as a new research priority. Ideas suggested included pilot testing or wet weather watershed modeling to establish the information we currently have, the datasets and data collection gaps that need to be closed, and what else is needed.

Human markers based on land use/development were proposed as a research priority to determine if there are trends with land use and human markers.

Focused outreach for source identification projects would assist in identifying future implementation projects. There was discussion of allowing remaining Proposition 13 and 50 funds for source ID work.

BMP effectiveness assessment for CBI projects

The CBTF discussed the effectiveness of BMPs implemented as part of previous CBI projects. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

Projects should be plotted on a map to better understand their spatial relation and categories.

Heal the Bay has proposed a Supplemental Environmental Project to the Los Angeles Regional Water Board that would analyze the effectiveness of 15 previous CBI projects in Los Angeles County (attached). One idea is to provide funding to expand the analysis to Statewide. If funded, the results should be linked on the Water Quality Monitoring Council's website. The State Water Board is evaluating the eligibility of this as a research proposal.

John Dorsey offered to host a meeting at Loyola Marymount University in late March to discuss BMP effectiveness and the status of Heal the Bay's proposal (above). The outcome of this could be better selection of proposals for CBI and other programs.

The applicants' ability and history of maintaining BMPs should be considered when reviewing proposals. For example, one CBTF member indicated that permeable pavement parking lots require regular vacuuming to remain permeable, and that sweeping (which is commonly used) is not effective. The criteria for effectiveness should include monitoring for indicator bacteria before and after the project; possibly also source identification.

Round 3 plan

The CBTF discussed suggestions for improving the quantity and quality of proposals received. The following is a summary of comments made by CBTF members:

Proposals should have a dry-weather focus. Applicants should have a design for their proposal, have CEQA completed, and have clear permitting needs in order to not delay construction if the grant is awarded. Surfrider Beach and Malibu Pier were identified as possible target locations. Proposals should be solicited especially from municipalities that are near priority beaches.

Plan next meeting

The next meeting will depend on the scheduling of Round 3. State Water Board staff will announce suggestions for scheduling the next meeting at a later date.

Attachments:

- 1) Heal the Bay SEP proposal
- 2) Response to CBTF Comments: Pin 24702 An epidemiologic study of health risks associated with surfing in wet and dry weather in Southern California