

**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
and  
STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD**

**FIVE YEAR COORDINATED WORK PLAN  
for  
WETLANDS CONSERVATION PROGRAM  
DEVELOPMENT**

**April 11, 2011**

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**Introduction**

This five year coordinated work plan has been developed by staff of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to carry out each agency's directives regarding wetland conservation program development. The planning activities described in this work plan will develop each agency's wetland program in accordance with their respective agency's guidance and policies. (See Attachment A for a summary of past program accomplishments.)

**1. Overall Goal Statement**

Through this plan, our goal is to:

*Increase the abundance and diversity of California's wetlands and riparian areas,  
and to sustain and enhance the delivery of ecosystem services.*

**2. General Background**

**2.a. Department of Fish and Game**

Several initiatives are underway in California to better coordinate, monitor and regulate activities that may impact California's wetlands, and as trustee for the State's fish and wildlife resources, DFG needs to play a role in these efforts.

In 2008, the California Wetlands Monitoring Workgroup (CWMW) was convened to better coordinate the wetland monitoring activities of State and federal agencies involved in wetland monitoring and regulation. Staff from the DFG Water Branch co-chaired this group and provided technical input on a variety of monitoring and policy topics including the development and use of the California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM) and CRAM's use in DFG programs such as the Lake and Streambed Alteration program.

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Additionally in 2008, the State Water Board began development of a Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy (Policy) that is intended to better regulate wetland resources of California. In its initial stages, the Policy is focused on defining wetlands (e.g., a consistent State Water Board definition), development of a wetland classification system, wetland monitoring, and possibly definitions of riparian areas, stream bank and stream bed. DFG has participated in the development of this Policy through the State Water Board's Interagency Coordinating Committee (ICC) and the CWMW. DFG has been represented by Water Branch with the assistance of the Habitat Conservation and Planning Branch, Wildlife and Fisheries Branches.

Since the completion of the State of the State's Wetlands Report in 2010, DFG has further begun to clarify and specify its role in the identification, monitoring, assessment, and protection of California wetlands. Through the actions described below, DFG will continue to help coordinate wetland monitoring in the State, improve consistency among wetland-related regulatory efforts, identify and map the wetland resources of the State, and continue wetlands conservation, management and restoration activities in cooperation with partner agencies and organizations statewide.

### **2.b. State Water Resources Control Board**

State Water Board will take two major actions over the next five year planning period to support our goal. We will implement efforts to strengthen the dredge and fill regulatory program and also develop a wetland assessment and monitoring framework (assessment framework) that all State Water Board Water Quality programs will adopt. The State Water Board's adoption of the Phase 1 Wetland and Riparian Protection Policy (Policy) will initiate both of these measures.

State Water Board will develop the Policy in three phases. The Policy will include a wetland definition and related delineation method, an assessment framework, and water quality standards protective of wetlands and riparian areas. The assessment framework will be coordinated through the California Wetlands Monitoring Workgroup of the California Water Quality Monitoring Council.

Phase 1 is scheduled for adoption late 2012. The State Water Board recently posted a Notice of EIR Preparation and scoping meetings (January 5, 2011) for Phase 1.

Phase 1 will lay the foundation for subsequent Phases, and include:

- A wetland definition that reliably defines the diverse array of California wetlands and incorporates the United States Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) delineation methodology to the extent feasible; and

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- A regulatory mechanism for the discharge of dredge and fill material to all state waters, including wetlands, based on Clean Water Act Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines (40 CFR parts 230-233, inclusive), and the federal rule on Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources (33 CFR part 325 and 332, and 40 CFR part 230).
- An assessment method for collecting water quality and wetland data to monitor progress toward water quality and wetland protection and to evaluate program development.

Phase 2 will expand the scope of the policy to protect wetlands from all other activities potentially impacting water quality, and include:

- New and/or revised beneficial use definitions;
- Water quality objectives to support those beneficial uses;
- A program of implementation to apply the water quality objectives, as necessary, to protect all waters, including wetlands, and their water quality functions for all waste discharges (e.g. wastewater and stormwater).

Phase 3 will identify, protect, and promote the restoration of riparian areas and their functioning to support water quality and beneficial uses, and include:

- A definition for riparian areas;
- New and/or revised beneficial use definitions;
- Water quality objectives to support those beneficial uses;
- A program of implementation to achieve the water quality objectives to protect riparian area water quality related functions.

### **2.c. Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Program**

All activities of this work plan related to assessment and monitoring will be consistent with the Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Program (WRAMP), developed by the CWMW and endorsed by the California Water Quality Monitoring Council (Monitoring Council) in June 2010.

CWMW continues work towards agreement on standardized aquatic resource mapping and definitions, monitoring and assessment approaches, and information collection and reporting. Standardization will provide the underpinnings for WRAMP, which is a coordinated statewide wetland assessment strategy that allocates monitoring and assessment functions to various state agencies including the State Water Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Water Boards collectively), and Department of Fish and Game. The vision is that all departments within Cal/EPA and the Natural Resources Agency will implement the WRAMP.

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The State Water Board Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) will provide support tools to all workgroups of the Monitoring Council. This includes a rigorous quality assurance/quality control program, the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) to share ambient water quality data between Water Board programs and with other agencies and organizations, and a system of Regional Data Centers to assist data generators with data comparability and management. SWAMP was envisioned to coordinate all water quality monitoring conducted by the State and Regional Boards to assess attainment of all core beneficial uses in all waterbody types.

### **2.c.(i). WRAMP Tenets**

The WRAMP is based on the following tenets:

- Report to the public and State agencies answers to three basic questions: (1) Where are the wetlands and riparian areas, (2) what is their health status, and (3) are the policies, programs, and projects to restore and protect wetlands and riparian areas working?
- Minimize new program costs by leveraging existing programs and projects through their use of standardized core methodologies for mapping, assessment, quality assurance, data management, and reporting.
- Use the peer-review process of the State Water Board to help assure the scientific credibility of core methodologies used in ambient assessment and regulatory project assessment.
- Provide a standardized base map of California's wetlands and other aquatic resources, maintained by DFG, for use by all local, state, and federal agencies.
- Integrate fully with SWAMP allowing implementation of WRAMP through regional programs served by the CEDEN Regional Data Centers and delimited by the boundaries of its Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Board).
- Allow these regional programs to supplement the core methodologies to meet special local and regional information needs.
- Remain coordinated statewide through CWMW, a sanctioned workgroup of the Monitoring Council, on an ongoing basis.

### **3. Actions and Activities to Support the Overall Goal**

#### **3.a. Plan Organization**

This work plan outlines specific activities over the next five years that are related to U.S Environmental Protection Agency's core elements of an effective state and tribal wetland program:

Regulation  
Monitoring and Assessment  
Water Quality Standards for Wetlands

Voluntary Restoration and Protection

Yearly activities will focus on selected core program elements; not all elements will be addressed in any given year.

#### **3.b. Watershed Approach**

This work plan will integrate the use of the watershed approach in all core areas. The approach is applied to leverage each of the core activities that protect and restore wetlands and riparian areas toward attainment of community-based environmental goals. Ecosystem restoration and management are considered components of protection.

More specifically, the watershed approach considers the abundance, locations, types and condition of aquatic resources in a watershed and how those factors contribute in the support of beneficial uses, fish and wildlife habitat and attainment of watershed goals. Consideration also is given to understanding historic and potential aquatic resource conditions, past and projected aquatic resource impacts in the watershed, and terrestrial connections between aquatic resources. Use of the watershed approach is intended to sustain or restore the natural abundance, the diversity and the ecological condition of aquatic resources in a broad landscape context. The watershed approach also is flexible in its recognition that ecosystem enhancement may be the environmentally preferred management practice in some highly disturbed, heavily engineered or rapidly changing environmental settings. Reporting on a watershed basis better informs land use decision making.

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## 3.c. DFG Specific Actions

Table 1: DFG Planned Actions and Target Dates

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
<b>Core Element: Regulation</b>			
1. CWMW	Continue participation as co-chair of the CWMW. DFG shall be represented by staff from the Water Branch and Habitat Conservation Planning Branch.	Meeting Minutes	2010 and ongoing
2. ICC	Continue participation in the ICC. DFG shall be represented by staff from the Water Branch and the Habitat Conservation Planning Branch. Participation in the program is necessary as efforts from the Policy will likely affect the DFG Lake and Streambed Alteration Program.	Meeting Minutes	2010 and ongoing
<b>Core Element: Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</b>			
3. Map Development	Continue participation in the development of maps, including the development of the wetland classification system, through the CWMW. DFG shall be represented by staff from the Biogeographic Data Branch.	Meeting Minutes	2010 and ongoing
4. Map Management	Manage the State's wetland and other aquatic resource maps. Management shall be done through the DFG Biogeographic Data Branch. All data/metadata will be available for public viewing and downloading thru DFG's BIOS website at <a href="http://bios.dfg.ca.gov">bios.dfg.ca.gov</a> and through the establishment of web services and/or other data exchange mechanisms. Links to DFG's BIOS website can be made from any other organizations website.	Wetland and aquatic resource maps, web service and data exchange mechanisms	2015
5. Reporting	In collaboration with other agencies through the CWMW, report to decision makers and the public via the California Wetlands Portal ( <a href="http://www.californiawetlands.net">www.californiawetlands.net</a> ) answers to three basic questions: (1) "Where are the wetlands and riparian areas," (2) "What is their health status," and (3) "Are the policies, programs, and projects to restore and protect wetlands and riparian areas working?"	My Water Quality Portal Home Page	2010 and ongoing

\*\*\* Starred items are projects funded by USEPA

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**Table 1: DFG Planned Actions and Target Dates Continued**

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
<b>Core Element: Voluntary Restoration and Protection</b>			
6. Wetland Conservation Programs	Continue active engagement in wetlands conservation, management and restoration activities throughout the State through participation on the management boards of the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Joint Ventures and associated working groups and the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project through the Department's Wildlife Branch and Regions.	Meeting minutes and project reports, publications, and updates	2010 and ongoing
7. Wetland Acquisition and Restoration	Continue working to actively acquire and restore wetlands in cooperation with partner agencies and organizations statewide.	Agency updates, project reports and/or publications	2010 and ongoing

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**Table 2: Web links to DFG Table 1 Work Products**

TABLE 1 ITEM NUMBER	NAME	WEB LINK
3.	Biogeographic Data Branch	<a href="http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/">http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/</a>
4.	Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS) website	<a href="http://www.bios.dfg.ca.gov">http://www.bios.dfg.ca.gov</a>
5.	Information Sharing	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/mywaterquality/">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/mywaterquality/</a>
6. 7.	Comprehensive Wetland Habitat Program	<a href="http://www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/wetland/">http://www.dfg.ca.gov/lands/wetland/</a>

### 3.d. State Water Board Specific Actions

**Table 3: State Water Board Planned Actions and Target Dates**

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
<b>Core Element: Regulation</b>			
1. Develop Definitions***	Develop draft definitions for wetland areas, riparian areas and stream channels.	Technical Advisory Team Memos	2010 (wetland definition only other work on-going).
2. Phase 1 Policy***	Draft Phase 1 Wetland Area Protection Policy document to include a wetland definition, a delineation method and an assessment and monitoring framework.	Draft Policy for public review	Summer 2011

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**Table 3: State Water Board Planned Actions and Target Dates Continued**

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
<b>Core Element: Regulation</b>			
3. Phase 1 Regulations	Draft Phase 1 regulations for the discharge of dredge and fill material that complement the USEPA/Corps' 404 (b)(1) Guidelines and the federal Compensatory Mitigation Rule.	Draft Dredge and Fill Regulations for public review	Summer 2011
4. Coordinate Policy/Reg Development with Regional Water Boards***	Coordinate Phase 1 efforts with all Regional Water Boards, and specifically with the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Region 2's) proposed Stream and Wetland Systems Protection Policy Basin Plan amendments.	Meeting Minutes	Ongoing monthly
5. Watershed Approach***	Draft conceptual regulatory decision framework for applying the watershed approach to mitigation decisions. Using actual proposed projects, pilot the conceptual decision framework for applying the watershed approach in mitigation projects.	Regulatory Decision Framework for Watershed Approach	Fall 2011
6. Advanced Mitigation Planning***	Collaborate with federal and state agencies in developing methods for evaluating and locating "advanced mitigation" sites.	Regulatory Decision Framework for Advanced Mitigation Planning	Summer 2012
7. Mitigation Bank RT Participation	Develop means for State Water Board participation on mitigation bank review teams in collaboration with other participating federal and state agencies.	Agency MOU	Fall 2011
8. Phase 1 EIR Drafting Process***	Prepare environmental documents necessary for the public review of the Phase 1 Policy and regulations. The environmental documents include an Initial Study and a Program EIR. Hold public workshops and CEQA scoping meetings to obtain public input on the Policy, regulations, and scope of the EIR.	Draft IS/EIR and CEQA scoping meeting materials	Summer 2011
9. Phase 1 EIR Public Review	Post draft EIR, Policy and regulations for public comment and respond to comments. Hold public hearings on draft Policy, regulations and EIR. Respond to comments, and make any necessary revisions.	Draft EIR	Fall 2011

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**Table 3: State Water Board Planned Actions and Target Dates Continued**

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
<b>Core Element: Regulation</b>			
10. State Water Board Adoption of Phase 1	Obtain State Water Board Approval of Phase 1 Policy and regulations.	Policy and Regulations	2012
11. Phase 1 Implementation	Develop Phase 1 Implementation Plan to transfer Policy to the Regional Water Boards. Develop and print Phase 1 training manuals and implementation guidance materials. Roll out Phase 1 Implementation Plan to transfer Policy to Regional Boards.	Phase 1 Implementation Plan	2012
<b>Core Element: Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</b>			
12. Online Electronic Application with Mapping Tool***	Develop an online water quality certification application form for 401 permits that will allow applicants to map waters and riparian areas impacted by the project and proposed mitigation sites using online mapping tools. Provide that the data will be transferred to the State Water Boards CIWQS database automatically. Develop this program for project management allowing Water Board staff to automate certifications, track project milestones, file documents, and communicate with project applicants.	Online Application available for pilot Water Boards	2011
13. CRAM Calibration***	Continue scientific efforts through CWMW to calibrate and verify level 2 CRAM as the core method for cost-effective monitoring of wetland and riparian condition. A set of more intensive Level 3 multi-metric indices of condition will be developed for CRAM calibration, and to provide quality assurance control for wetland and riparian surveys of ambient condition. A network of reference wetland and riparian sites will be developed over time to support multi-metric development and CRAM refinement.	CRAM modules	2009 and ongoing

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## Wetland Conservation Plan

**Table 3: State Water Board Planned Actions and Target Dates Continued**

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
<b>Core Element: Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</b>			
14. CRAM Training***	Continue level 2 CRAM training statewide and make the training available through the State Water Board's Training Academy.	CRAM Training publications	2009 and ongoing
15. CRAM modules***	Continue scientific efforts through CWMW to expand CRAM for additional wetland types.	CRAM modules	2009 and ongoing
16. Level 1 Mapping	Research, develop and coordinate use of standard methods for wetland, stream, and riparian mapping, data collection, data management and data analysis through CWMW. Ensure that these methods comply with developing State policies, and are compatible with the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) system and its network of Regional Data Centers.	Level 1 Maps	2009 and ongoing
17. QA/QC for Level 2 data	Implement SWAMP recommended Quality Assurance and Data Management Programs to support the accurate collection and reporting of all project data.	Wetland data QA/QC Guidelines	2015
18. Regional Capacity Building	Ensure that state programs support the regional approach to tool development and data collection. Provide adequate support for regional CRAM/Audit teams and CEDEN Regional Data Centers to ensure regional capacity for state programs and continued integration with regional partners, especially Regional Water Boards.	Regional Capacity Building Strategy Plan	2015
19. WRAMP Partnership Support	Provide support necessary for partner agency to adopt and integrate wetland assessment and inventory tools and data into regulatory and grant programs.	Regional "WRAMP Implementation Plan	2015
20. Riparian Area Assessment--/ Data Collection***	Expand tool development and initiate field data collection to support riparian policy objectives of Regional and State Water Boards as defined in Phase 3 of Policy.	Technical Memorandum No. 3: Landscape Framework for Wetlands and Other Aquatic Areas	2010 and ongoing

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**Table 3: State Water Board Planned Actions and Target Dates Continued**

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
<b>Core Element: <i>Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</i></b>			
21. Data Management	Ensure that all data are secured on existing State Water Board data systems or at one or more of the CEDEN Regional Data Centers.	Wetland Data Management Guidelines	2015
22. Metadata Exchange	Make these data and metadata available to other agencies through the establishment of web services and/or other data exchange mechanisms.	Wetland Metadata Exchange Protocols	2015
23. Information Sharing	In collaboration with other agencies through the CWMW, report to decision makers and the public via the California Wetlands Portal ( <a href="http://www.californiawetlands.net">www.californiawetlands.net</a> ) answers to three basic questions: (1) "Where are the wetlands and riparian areas," (2) "What is their health status," and (3) "Are the policies, programs, and projects to restore and protect wetlands and riparian areas working?"	My Water Quality Portal Home Page	2010 and ongoing
<b>Core Element: <i>Water Quality Standards</i></b>			
24. Phase 2 Wetland Water Quality Objectives	Develop Phase 2 Policy statewide wetland beneficial uses and water quality objectives, and an implementation program.	Draft Wetland Water Quality Objectives Staff Report	2012
25. Phase 2 Environmental Document	Develop the environmental document and staff report to bring Phase 2 forward for adoption by the State Water Board as an amendment to the Wetland Protection Policy in 2014.	Draft Wetland Water Quality Environmental Document	2013
26. Phase 2 Stakeholder Review	Hold stakeholder meetings on Phase 2 wetland beneficial uses, water quality objectives and implementation program.	Stakeholder Meeting Agendas	2013
27. Phase 2 CEQA Scoping	Hold public workshops and CEQA scoping meetings to obtain public input on Phase 2 wetland beneficial uses, water quality objectives and implementation program (Policy amendment) and the scope of the EIR.	CEQA Scoping Meeting Materials	2013

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**Table 3: State Water Board Planned Actions and Target Dates Continued**

<b>ACTION ITEM</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PRODUCT</b>	<b>YEAR COMPLETED?</b>
<b>Core Element: Water Quality Standards</b>			
28. Phase 2 EIR Public Review	Post draft EIR and Policy amendment for public comment and respond to comments. Hold public hearings on Policy amendment and EIR. Respond to comments, and make any necessary revisions.	Draft EIR and Policy Amendment-Wetland WQOs	2014
29. State Water Board Adoption of Phase 2	Obtain State Water Board approval of Phase 2 Policy amendment for wetland beneficial uses, water quality objectives and implementation program.	Amended Wetland Area Protection Policy with WQOs	2014
30. Phase 2 Implementation Plan	Develop Phase 2 Implementation Plan to transfer wetland beneficial uses and water quality objectives to Regional Water Boards. Develop Phase 2 training manuals and implementation guidance materials. Roll out Phase 2 Implementation Plan to transfer wetland beneficial uses and water quality objectives to Regional Water Boards.	Phase 2 Implementation Plan	2015
31. Phase 3 Riparian Area Related Water Quality Objectives	Begin environmental documents and staff report to bring Phase 3 forward for adoption by the State Water Board.	Draft Phase 3 staff report	2015
32. Phase 3 Stakeholder Review	Hold stakeholder meetings on Phase 3.	Stakeholder meeting agendas	2015

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**Table 4: Web links to State Water Board Table 3 Work Products**

<b>TABLE 1 ITEM NUMBER</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>WEB LINK</b>
1.	Wetland Definition	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/tatmemo2_062509.pdf">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/tatmemo2_062509.pdf</a>
13.	CRAM Development	<a href="http://www.cramwetlands.org/">http://www.cramwetlands.org/</a>
8.	Phase 1 EIR Drafting Process	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/wrapp.shtml">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/wrapp.shtml</a>
20.	Riparian Area Assessment--Data Collection	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/wrapp/tatmemo3_061610.pdf">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/wrapp/tatmemo3_061610.pdf</a>
23.	Information Sharing	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/mywaterquality/">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/mywaterquality/ /</a>

**4. Annual Plan Review**

The Department of Fish and Game and the State Water Board will annually review and discuss progress towards achieving the goals of this joint agency wetlands conservation program for California. The developments on the specific actions of this plan will be updated and reported. Adjustments to this program will be made as needed and in coordination with the California Wetlands Monitoring Workgroup.

**5. Plan Authorization**

We, the undersigned, have reviewed this Wetlands Conservation Program Workplan and direct our respective staff to work cooperatively towards its development and implementation.



Victoria A. Whitney  
Deputy Director  
Division of Water Quality  
State Water Resources Control Board



Sandra Morey,  
Deputy Director  
Department of Fish and Game  
Natural Resources Agency

## Summary of Past Work

## A. Department of Fish and Game

Table 4 DFG Summary of Past Work

PAST STATE ACTION	EPA CORE ELEMENT	SUPPORT OF CURRENT ACTION ITEM	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
1. State of the State's Wetlands Report	Monitoring & Assessment	3.c., Table 1, Item 5	10 year Report	2010
2. Develop Wetland Definition	Regulatory	3.c., Table 1, Item 3	Draft State Water Board Wetland Definition	2010

Table 5: Web links to Table 4 Work Products

TABLE 4 ITEM NUMBER	NAME	WEB LINK
1.	California State of the State's Wetlands Report	<a href="http://resources.ca.gov/ocean/SOSW_report.pdf">http://resources.ca.gov/ocean/SOSW_report.pdf</a>
2.	Wetland Definition	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/tatmemo2_062509.pdf">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/tatmemo2_062509.pdf</a>

## B. State Water Resources Control Board

Table 6 State Water Board Summary of Past Work

PAST STATE ACTION	EPA CORE ELEMENT	SUPPORT OF CURRENT ACTION ITEM	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?
1. Develop Wetland Definition	Regulatory	3.d. Table 3, Item 1.	Draft State Water Board Wetland Definition	2010
2. CRAM Development	Monitoring, Assessment, Reporting	3.d. Table 3, Item 13-15	CRAM Modules	2009 and ongoing

Table 7: Web links to Table 6 Work Products

TABLE 1 ITEM NUMBER	NAME	WEB LINK
1.	Wetland Definition	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/tatmemo2_062509.pdf">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/tatmemo2_062509.pdf</a>
13.	CRAM	<a href="http://www.cramwetlands.org/">http://www.cramwetlands.org/</a>

**ACRONYMS**

<b><i>BIOS</i></b>	Biogeographic Information and Observation System
<b><i>CEDEN</i></b>	California Environmental Data Exchange Network
<b><i>CEQA</i></b>	California Environmental Quality Act
<b><i>CFR</i></b>	Code of Federal Regulations
<b><i>CIWQS</i></b>	California Integrated Water Quality System
<b><i>CRAM</i></b>	California Rapid Assessment Method
<b><i>CWMW</i></b>	California Wetland Monitoring Workgroup
<b><i>DFG</i></b>	California Department of Fish and Game
<b><i>EIR</i></b>	Environmental Impact Report
<b><i>ICC</i></b>	Interagency Coordinating Committee
<b><i>IS</i></b>	Initial Scoping
<b><i>MONITORING COUNCIL</i></b>	California Water Quality Monitoring Council
<b><i>POLICY</i></b>	Wetland and Riparian Protection Policy
<b><i>REGIONAL WATER BOARD</i></b>	Regional Water Quality Control Boards
<b><i>STATE WATER BOARD</i></b>	State Water Resources Control Board
<b><i>SWAMP</i></b>	Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program
<b><i>WRAMP</i></b>	Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Program





The State Water Resources Control Board and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife annually report on the progress made on tasks identified in the 2011 Five Year Wetland Conservation Workplan. In this report, the State Water Resources Control Board staff have provided updates to Tables 3 and 4 for the various tasks in the Workplan.

# 2012 Annual Plan Update

May 22, 2013

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## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Regulation</b>				
1. Develop Definitions <u>and recommend wetland delineation procedures</u> ***	Develop draft definitions for wetland areas, riparian areas and stream channels.	Technical Advisory Team Memos; <u>Peer Review</u>	2010 (wetland definition only other work on-going).	Completed wetland definition peer review; Completed delineation recommendation; Will web post July 2013; Draft riparian and stream definitions will be submitted to The State Board in 2013
2. Phase 1 Policy***	Draft Phase 1 Wetland Area Protection <u>and Dredge and Fill Permitting</u> Policy document to include a wetland definition, a delineation method and <del>an assessment and monitoring framework and dredge and fill permitting procedures modeled after the 404(b)(1) Guidelines including the mitigation rule.</del>	Draft Policy <u>and enviro doc</u> for public review <u>and comment</u>	<del>Summer 2014</del> <u>October 2013</u>	The policy and regulations were combined into one policy document. The term "regulations" was replaced with "procedures." The policy is currently being reviewed by management and legal and may undergo additional changes in response to stakeholder input.
3. Phase 1 Regulations <u>Procedures</u> ***	Draft Phase 1 for the discharge of dredge and fill material that complement the USEPA/Corps' 404 (b)(1) Guidelines and the federal Compensatory Mitigation Rule.	Draft Dredge and Fill <u>procedures</u> for public review	<del>Summer 2014</del> <u>January 2013</u>	The Policy and Procedures are currently posted on the Wetland webpage and will go out for public comment October 2013. . .
4. Coordinate Policy/Reg Development with Regional Water Boards***	Coordinate Phase 1 efforts with all Regional Water Boards, and specifically with the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Region 2's) proposed Stream and Wetland Systems Protection Policy Basin Plan amendments.	Meeting Minutes	<u>Ongoing</u> <u>monthly</u> <u>Completed</u>	Coordination was completed January 2012 at the staff level.

\*\*\* Starred items are projects funded by USEPA

## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Regulation</b>				
5. Watershed Approach***	Draft conceptual regulatory decision framework for applying the watershed approach to mitigation decisions. Using actual proposed projects, pilot the conceptual decision framework for applying the watershed approach in mitigation projects.	Regulatory Decision Framework for Watershed Approach	<del>Fall 2011</del> <del>Fall 2013</del>	Since the Corps has recently developed a mitigation decision SOP, we are now looking at how to integrate it with work done by Rich Sumner on the assessment framework for applying the watershed approach to mitigation. TAT is developing a technical memo that features the EcoAtlas "Watershed Profile Tool" as the source of environmental information for the SOP(s).
6. Advanced Mitigation Planning***	Collaborate with federal and state agencies in developing methods for evaluating and locating "advanced mitigation" sites.	Regulatory Decision Framework for Advanced Mitigation Planning	<del>Summer 2012</del> <u>Ongoing</u> <u>coordination with RAMP committee.</u> <u>Work will focus on integrating WRAMP and the Watershed Profile tool.</u>	State Water Board Executive Director is a signatory to the RAMP Statewide Framework along with other agencies (October 2012). Staff currently attend RAMP coordination meetings.
7. Mitigation Bank RT Participation	Develop means for State Water Board participation on mitigation bank review teams in collaboration with other participating federal and state agencies.	Agency MOU	<del>Fall 2011</del> <u>Ongoing</u> <u>coordination with Corps' Mitigation Bank Program Development Team (PTD)</u>	State Water Board Chief Legal Counsel recently (September 2012) amended the PTD's draft Bank Enabling Agreement Template to include the Water Boards as signatories.
8. Phase 1 <u>EIR</u> <u>SED</u> Drafting Process***	Prepare environmental documents necessary for the public review of the Phase 1 Policy and <del>regulations</del> <u>procedures</u> . The environmental documents <del>include an Initial Study and a Program EIR is a</del> <u>Substitute Environmental Document (SED) which is authorized for policies and plans.</u> Hold public workshops and CEQA scoping meetings.	Draft <u>IS/EIR</u> <u>SED</u> and CEQA scoping meeting materials	<del>Summer 2011</del> <u>October 2013</u>	The draft SED is currently being reviewed by staff, management and legal.

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## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Regulation</b>				
9. Phase 1 <b>EIR SED</b> Public Review	Post draft <b>EIR SED, Policy/procedures and regulations</b> for public comment and respond to comments. Hold public hearings on draft Policy, <b>regulations</b> and EIR. Respond to comments.	<b>Draft EIR Response to Comments</b>	<b>Fall-2011 October-December 2013; response to comment early 2014.</b>	Public comment period is scheduled for Oct-Dec 2013.
10. State Water Board Adoption of Phase 1	Obtain State Water Board Approval of Phase 1 Policy and regulations.	Policy and Regulations	<b>2012 Mid- 2014</b>	Ongoing efforts to move Policy through management review.
11. Phase 1 Implementation	Develop Phase 1 Implementation Plan to transfer Policy to the Regional Water Boards. Develop and print Phase 1 training manuals and implementation guidance materials. Roll out Phase 1 Implementation Plan to transfer Policy to Regional Boards.	Phase 1 Implementation Plan	<b>2012 Winter 2014</b>	Work has begun on developing FAQs through collaboration with Office of Public Affairs, TAT, CWMW, State Water Board.
<b>Core Element: Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</b>				
12. Online Electronic Application with Mapping Tool***	Develop an online water quality certification application form for 401 permits that will allow applicants to map waters and riparian areas impacted by the project and proposed mitigation sites using online mapping tools. Provide that the data will be transferred to the State Water Boards CIWQS database automatically. Develop this program for project management allowing Water Board staff to automate certifications, track project milestones, file documents, and communicate with project applicants.	Online Application available for pilot Water Boards <b>with output to CIWQS and CEDEN through EcoAtlas such that it can be included in Watershed Profiles.</b>	<b>2011 Winter 2013</b>	<b>SFEI-ASC is currently undertaking a pilot project with Regions 1, 2, 4, 8 and 9 &amp; the State Water Board to test out the proto-type. After the pilot, which involves having regular applicants use the online application, required changes will be identified by pilot participants. The next step would be adoption by State Water Board and establishing data exchanges through web services for EcoAtlas.</b>
13. CRAM Calibration** *	Continue scientific efforts through CWMW to calibrate and validate Level 2 CRAM as the core method for efficient monitoring of wetland and riparian condition. A network of reference wetland and riparian sites are being developed.	<b>Calibration /implement selected modules via statewide network of reference sites for selected modules.</b>	2009 and ongoing	Reference sites have been identified for riverine, estuarine, and depressional wetlands. State Water Board staff chair the L-2 Committee of CWMW coordinating these efforts.

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## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</b>				
14. CRAM Training***	Continue Level 2 CRAM training statewide and make the training available through the State Water Board's Training Academy.	CRAM Training publications	2009 and ongoing	CRAM trainings are now being held annually in various locations through the L-2 Committee (see web link in table 2 below).
15. CRAM modules***	Continue scientific efforts through CWMW to expand CRAM for additional wetland types.	<b><u>New CRAM modules are for wet meadows, bar-built estuaries, episodic streams, and seasonal depressions</u></b>	2009 and ongoing	CWMW continues to direct this effort as a high priority item. CRAM modules for wet meadows, seasonal depressions and bar-built estuaries are in final production for June 2013. Module for episodic streams is in early development.
16. Level 1 Mapping***	Research, develop and coordinate use of standard methods for wetland, stream, and riparian mapping, data collection, data management and data analysis through CWMW. Ensure that these methods comply with developing State policies, and are compatible with the California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) system and its network of Regional Data Centers.	<b><u>Mapping standards and procedures for the California Aquatic Resource Inventory (CARI) as stand-alone Level 1 inventory and as base map for EcoAtlas and My Water Quality Portals.</u></b>	2009 and ongoing	CWMW continues to direct this effort as a high priority item. CARI standards have been drafted by TAT with input from SFEI, SCCWRP, DWR, SWRCB, DFG, COE, USGS, USFWS, and others. There is a need to turn this workgroup into the Level 1 Committee of the CWMW to coordinate CARI implementation. Initial work has begun on developing a statewide wetlands status and trends program with seed money from EPA grants.  Per August 29 CA Monitoring Council agreement Dale Hoffman-Floerke and Jonathan Bishop will pursue state stewardship strategy.

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## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</b>				
17. QA/QC for Level 2 data	Implement SWAMP recommended Quality Assurance and Data Management Programs to support the accurate collection and reporting of all project data.	<u>A QAQC plan to meet SWAMP and 404/401 requirements</u>	<del>2015</del> <u>2013</u>	The L-2 committee is working with the SWAMP roundtable. SWAMP has adopted CRAM as a SWAMP assessment method (March 2013). A QAQC plan has been drafted and will go to CWMW and SWAMP in 2013.
18. Regional Capacity Building	Ensure that state programs support the regional approach to tool development and data collection. Provide adequate support for regional CRAM/Audit teams and CEDEN Regional Data Centers to ensure regional capacity for state programs and continued integration with regional partners, especially Regional Water Boards <u>and the Delta Conservancy.</u>	Regional Capacity Building Strategy Plan	2015	CWMW continues to direct this effort as a high priority item. State Water Board staff is pursuing funding support through increased 401 fees for regional CRAM/Audit teams and QA/QC of data (April 2013). State Water Board is pursuing partnership opportunities with the Delta Conservancy for monitoring and assessment of the Delta.
19. WRAMP Partnership Support***	Provide support necessary for partner agency to adopt and integrate wetland assessment and inventory tools and data into regulatory and grant programs. State Board will pursue joint projects with Regional Boards and Delta Conservancy to share information and WRAMP implementation strategies. <u>Work will focus on expanding the functionality of EcoAtlas for state, federal, and local entities to track various project types with additional query capabilities.</u>	Regional WRAMP Implementation Plan	<del>2015</del> <u>2010 and ongoing</u>	In 2010, the CA Water Quality Monitoring Council endorsed WRAMP for integration into state agency planning. CWMW continues to coordinate efforts and expand the capabilities of EcoAtlas.

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## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</b>				
20. Riparian Area Assessment/- Data Collection***	Expand tool development and initiate field data collection to support riparian policy objectives of Regional and State Water Boards as defined in Phase 3 of Policy.	Technical Memorandum No. 3: Landscape Framework for Wetlands and Other Aquatic Areas; <u>Riparian Buffer Width Decision Tool.</u>	2010 and ongoing	There has been ongoing coordination with SWAMP on the use of CRAM in the Perennial Stream Assessment program to evaluate the biological condition of streams and adjacent riparian areas. Through the TAT, SFEI-ASC continues to develop the riparian mapping tool that is now being modified to map alternative riparian buffer widths.
22. Metadata Exchange***	Make these data and metadata available to other agencies through the establishment of web services and/or other data exchange mechanisms.	Wetland Metadata Exchange Protocols Metadata <u>available through EcoAtlas</u>	2015	Data sources and metadata documented on EcoAtlas. Landscape profile tool on EcoAtlas enables wetland data and information aggregation.  Alignment between the Data Management Workgroup of the Water Quality Monitoring Council and CWMW scheduled for 2013.

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## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Monitoring, Assessment, and Reporting</b>				
23. Information Sharing***	<p>In collaboration with other agencies through the CWMW, report to decision makers and the public <b>via the California EcoAtlas (<a href="http://www.ecoatlas.org">www.ecoatlas.org</a>)</b> answers to three basic questions: (1) "Where are the wetlands and riparian areas," (2) "What is their health status," and (3) "Are the policies, programs, and projects to restore and protect wetlands and riparian areas working?"</p> <p><b><u>My Water Quality Wetlands Portal targets the public and decisions makers.</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>CARI v. 0 compiles best available wetland maps for the state</u></b></p> <p><b><u>CRAM data tools (eCRAM and EcoAtlas display tools provide access to CRAM results for 2,500 assessments statewide</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Landscape profile tool designed for programmatic assessments</u></b></p> <p>My Water Quality Portal Home Page</p>	2010 and ongoing	<p><b>EcoAtlas beta version released October 1, 2012. Public release planned for 2013, pending CWMW and CA Monitoring Council sign off.</b></p> <p><b>My Water Quality Wetland portal developed by CWMW and SFEI. Content has been transferred to the State Water Board October 2012 for programming and integration into MWQ Portal site. Now State Water Board staff will continue to improve the portal's information effectiveness. SFEI will continue to serve spatial data to the Portal.</b></p>

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## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Water Quality Standards</b>				
24. Phase 2 Wetland Water Quality Objectives***	Develop Phase 2 Policy statewide wetland beneficial uses and water quality objectives, and an implementation program. Conduct pilot projects in Regions 1, 6 and 9 to test implementation program	Draft Wetland Water Quality Objectives Staff Report	2012	Have developed a white paper on proposed Phase II BUs and WQOs through collaboration with Rich Sumner EPA and TAT. Pilot projects with Regions have been initiated (May 2013).
25. Phase 2 Environmental Document	Develop the environmental document and staff report to bring Phase 2 forward for adoption by the State Water Board as an amendment to the Wetland Protection Policy in 2014.	Draft Wetland Water Quality Environmental Document	2013	No work initiated.
26. Phase 2 Stakeholder Review	Hold stakeholder meetings on Phase 2 wetland beneficial uses, water quality objectives and implementation program.	Stakeholder Meeting Agendas	2013	No stakeholder work initiated.
27. Phase 2 CEQA Scoping	Hold public workshops and CEQA scoping meetings to obtain public input on Phase 2 wetland beneficial uses, water quality objectives and implementation program (Policy amendment) and the scope of the EIR.	CEQA Scoping Meeting Materials	2013	No work initiated
28. Phase 2 EIR Public Review	Post draft EIR and Policy amendment for public comment and respond to comments. Hold public hearings on Policy amendment and EIR. Respond to comments, and make any necessary revisions.	Draft EIR and Policy Amendment-Wetland WQOs	2014	No work initiated
29. State Water Board Adoption of Phase 2	Obtain State Water Board approval of Phase 2 Policy amendment for wetland beneficial uses, water quality objectives and implementation program.	Amended Wetland Area Protection Policy with WQOs	2014	No work initiated

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## State Water Board Wetland Conservation Plan Elements 2012 Update

ACTION ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	YEAR COMPLETED?	May 2013 Update
<b>Core Element: Water Quality Standards</b>				
30. Phase 2 Implementation Plan	Develop Phase 2 Implementation Plan to transfer wetland beneficial uses and water quality objectives to Regional Water Boards. Develop Phase 2 training manuals and implementation guidance materials. Roll out Phase 2 Implementation Plan to transfer wetland beneficial uses and water quality objectives to Regional Water Boards.	Phase 2 Implementation Plan	2015	No work initiated
31. Phase 3 Riparian Area Related Water Quality Objectives	Begin environmental documents and staff report to bring Phase 3 forward for adoption by the State Water Board.	Draft Phase 3 staff report	2015	No work initiated
32. Phase 3 Stakeholder Review	Hold stakeholder meetings on Phase 3.	Stakeholder meeting agendas	2015	No work initiated

**Table 2: Web links to State Water Board Table 3 Work Products**

TABLE 1 ITEM NUMBER	NAME	WEB LINK
1.	Wetland Definition	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/tatmemo2_062509.pdf">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/tatmemo2_062509.pdf</a>
13.	CRAM Development	<a href="http://www.cramwetlands.org/">http://www.cramwetlands.org/</a>
8.	Phase 1 EIR Drafting Process	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/wrapp.shtml">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/wrapp.shtml</a>
20.	Riparian Area Assessment/- Data Collection	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/wrapp/tatmemo3_061610.pdf">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/wrapp/tatmemo3_061610.pdf</a>
23.	Information Sharing	<a href="http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/mywaterquality/">http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/mywaterquality/ /</a>
<b>14</b>	<b>CRAM Trainings</b>	<a href="http://www.cramwetlands.org/training.html">http://www.cramwetlands.org/training.html</a>

**Update Authorization**

I have reviewed the 2012-2013 updates to the State Water Resources Control Boards' Five Year Coordinated Work Plan Elements.

Bill Orme

5/22/13

Bill Orme  
Chief, 401 Certification and Wetlands Unit  
Division of Water Quality  
State Water Resources Control Board

Date

