

Detailed meeting summary of the DISB Friday, April 10, 2015

1. Welcome and Declarations (Collier)

The meeting was called to order with Collier, Lund, Brandt, Wiens, Canuel, Fernando, Atwater and Norgaard present. No new declarations were made. Resh was absent. The meeting went into closed session for discussion of the Lead Scientist.

2. Closed Session – Personnel Matter: Lead Scientist Recruitment (Collier)

3. Reconvene Open Session (Collier)

4. Delta ISB Chair's Report and Business Matters (Collier)

- June 2015 Delta ISB Meeting Planning

In-Delta Meeting. In January 2015, Chair Collier introduced the idea of conducting a self-assessment in conjunction with an in-Delta meeting during June 2015. The idea behind the self-assessment was to review the effectiveness of the Board and receive feedback about ISB performance since the Board was reaching their 5-year mark and the first terms were coming to an end. Subsequently, Collier reported this idea to the Delta Stewardship Council, where it was well-received and Council members expressed interest in providing input to the self-assessment process. At this meeting of the Board, it was decided that the agenda for the in-Delta portion of the June meeting was not developed enough to engage the Delta constituents and more time was needed to receive input and craft an agenda that would address concerns of Delta residents and the role that science can play in helping address those issues. For this reason, the in-Delta meeting was postponed until October but the Board would still move forward with the self-assessment in June. Board members offered ideas about how to engage other parties in crafting a balanced agenda for the in-Delta meeting, sensitive to local issues. These included using other entities as potential interfaces for coordination (e.g. SeaGrant, The Delta Conservancy, Contra Costa Water District and The Delta Protection Commission).

Self-assessment. Atwater asked if the Board should seek outside perspectives for the self-assessment and Collier responded that members of the Council are interested in providing their perspective. Canuel asked about the possibility of framing a portion of the self-assessment as personnel time, such that the Board could privately discuss matters relating to their efficiency, effectiveness and business practices.

Action: Board members send thoughts to Brandt and Collier if you have ideas about what the ISB should accomplish during the self-assessment. Collier and Brandt will draft something in advance of the May meeting.

Action: Staff will seek clarification about whether this aspect of the ISB self-assessment could be framed or construed as personnel matters, and thus held as a closed session.

- Reappointment of ISB members

Collier reported that terms for six Board members end on August 31, 2015. The statute doesn't specify if reappointments happen formally or automatically. All current members of the Board are planning to stay on another term.

Action: Staff will find out if formal reappointment is necessary and if so what is the process and timeline.

- Other updates

Brandt delivered a presentation about 2014 ISB activities and 2015 priorities during the March 2015 IEP workshop. Collier asked if there was feedback on the 2015 priorities and Brandt said there were no comments specifically about 2015 priorities, but there were some questions about the Fish and Flows report.

Lund reported:

- The Delta Science Program, in conjunction with the Center for Watershed Sciences and funding from NSF, will be conducting a modeling symposium at UC Davis on May 21 and 22, 2015.
- An AGU Chapman conference on drought will be held in Irvine on April 20 – 22, 2015, <http://chapman.agu.org/drought/>

- There was no public comment on the Chair's report.

5. Council Chair, Executive Officer and Lead Scientist Report (Hastings and Hoenicke)

- Council Chair and Executive Officer's report (Hastings)
 - Lead Scientist Goodwin is now teaching on Fridays and Council Chair Fiorini and Executive Officer Pearson work at home on Fridays. For planning purposes, this should be taken into consideration if the ISB's expectation is to have a standing report from them.
 - The budget process is continuing through the legislature, assembly and senate. There is high-level support for the DSC's budget and a decision is expected in mid-June for July 2015 implementation.
 - Executive B-29-13 is the Governor's Executive Order (EO). This is a big deal for the State, the Science Program and the Council as they are expected to stay nimble and keep tabs on things mentioned in the EO (e.g. salinity barriers). The Science Program's interest in the barriers would be to understand what type of scientific evaluation is being planned. Collier asked if there was any formal attempt at evaluation of the adaptive management (AM) process and Hastings explained that this is a fast-moving effort; the barriers have been given an exemption from State permitting but not federal permitting. Wiens reiterates that whatever is done provides a great opportunity for putting into place the characteristics of the AM process. He advised that this opportunity should not

be wasted, as this can not only test AM itself, but also the process behind it. Norgaard asked if it is known how agencies have already mobilized in response to the drought. Hastings reported that the IEP started additional spatial and temporal monitoring that is being used for real-time water operations decision making. In addition, water quality, fisheries and aquatic monitoring plans for the barriers are being put together by the DWR's Bay-Delta Office. Atwater asked if there was a need for the Board to advocate for an engagement process that puts everyone on a single page, armed with strategies to conduct a drought assessment. Collier asked if this discussion should continue, ad-hoc, with the Science Program and Atwater asked if there would be any value in relaying Wien's advice to the Council? Hastings added that there is a panel of State and federal agencies that will brief the Council at their 4/23/15 meeting about current drought conditions, proposed water project operations, and planned and potential drought mitigation responses. Hastings suggested that ISB's sentiments could be relayed to the Council at their 4/23/15 by the Chair of the Council, provided that Randy Fiorini hears from the Board in advance of the 4/23/15 Council meeting.

Action: Wiens will draft comments that share the ISB's advice to seize this opportunity and send it to Collier for finalizing. Collier wants to make sure that this letter doesn't state the obvious, thereby offending anyone already taking this very seriously and working on it. The ISB needs to be aware of the context in which drought related activities are currently underway.

- Hastings reported that Pearson and Fiorini are interested in having a briefing with the Atwater, Norgaard and Lund to ensure that Delta Levees Investment Strategy work is properly aligned with the program review being conducted by ISB members. The program review should add value to the Investment Strategy, and vice versa. Atwater asked when the scientific peer-review panel to discuss review of Delta Levees Investment Strategy methodology was scheduled and Marina Brand reported that the public meetings are May 19th (all day) and 20th (afternoon only), <http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/events/science-program-review/delta-levee-prioritization-methodology-peer-review>
- The Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC) workgroup, along with DSC staff, put together a list of high-impact, actionable science activities. A public meeting was held on 4/8/15 to introduce stakeholders and the Delta community to the draft list. The set of actions will be presented to the DPIIC at their 5/11/15 meeting. The high-impact science items were categorized into four topic areas (Assessing drought-related effects on the Delta, Effectiveness and implications of habitat restoration actions, Science support for management of estuarine and migratory species, and Science supporting flood risk reduction and the economies of Delta communities) and then grouped into rapid-response and longer-term implementation. Rainer added that this process has created very positive synergies among people trying to figure out the mechanics behind joining forces by pooling resources. ISB members have been sent the list of high-

impact science items via email by Souza on 4/8/15 and they can also be found here: <http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/event-detail/11802>.

Action: Staff will think about ways to keep the ISB apprised of what is going on related to drought actions. Hastings suggested tuning into the webcasted Council meeting on 4/23/15 since there will be a drought panel consisting of State and federal agencies briefing the Council.

Action: Individual ISB members with feedback about the high-impact science actions can send them to Souza by Wednesday 4/15/15. Souza will forward comments to appropriate DSP staff so that they can be incorporated into the staff report to the DPIIC.

- The DSP is hoping to coordinate a grant solicitation and Fellow's solicitation as early as this summer, if they get support both for the topics and financially.
 - Yolo Bypass. A lot of work is being done to coordinate the efforts going on at the local, State and federal levels. This will be a topic of the May 11, 2015 DPIIC meeting and the hope is that this effort will become a model for future coordination among agencies.
 - Legislative bills. AB 501 (data sharing) and AB 1201 (assessment of stressors) -. Both bills are in a draft state. Staff will be tracking them closely, no action is necessary at this time and staff will keep the DISB apprised.
 - Fish and Flows report. Expect comments on the draft Fish and Flows report from DSC Executive Staff.
- Lead Scientist's report (Hastings and Hoenicke)

Introduction of new Sea Grant State Fellows

- Jahnava Duryea. She is the new state fellow that will be assisting the DISB. Jahnava recently graduated from Moss Landing Marine Lab with a Masters in Marine Science (Fisheries and Conservation Biology lab). She studied nearshore rockfish and MPA monitoring. Her thesis focused on helping the FDA find acceptable, inexpensive and novel methods to anesthetize and rerelease fish into the wild without residue. She received her undergraduate degree from UC Santa Cruz.
- Sean Windell. He is the new state fellow that will be assisting the IEP. Specifically, he's working on the SAIL effort (Salmonid, Steelhead and Sturgeon Assessment Indicators Life Stage). He recently graduated from Cal State Monterey Bay with a Masters in Applied Marine Science (Marine Landscape Ecology lab). His thesis focused on comparing the importance of intertidal habitat and protected areas for spiny lobster life history. Sean would be working directly with the IEP Lead Scientist, if that position wasn't currently vacant.

Personnel

- IEP Lead Scientist. Hoenicke reported that state Program Manager exams are anticipated this fall and the IEP Coordinators are planning on doing a lot of outreach and targeted recruitment between now and then. In the interim, the

IEP Coordinators will be asking the IEP Directors to appoint someone to the position until it can be filled on a permanent basis.

- ISB Board Vacancy. Goodwin is working with a short list of candidates and has started the discussion with each of them.

Science Activities

- State of Bay Delta Science. Darcy Austin reported that chapter coauthors have been identified and contracting is underway. There is a coordination meeting scheduled for mid-May.
- Modeling Summit. See Lund's comment in item 1.
- Delta Challenges – The Challenges workshop was hosted on March 16, 2015, in response to a request received by the Department of Interior and the Natural Resources Agency. All four previous lead scientists have been asked to pull together a report that addresses the largest challenges facing the Delta, from a scientific perspective. The report is supposed to be brief (15 – 20 pp) and easily digestible for policy makers and legislators. It is expected at the end of April or early May.

6. Data Summit White Paper (Hoenicke)

Hoenicke stated that the writing team would like comments from the DISB by COB Monday April 27, 2015 so that they can incorporate DISB comments before the public rollout. Changes to this version include:

- The Executive Summary (ES) has been framed as a teaser to encourage readers to read the full report. The ES has also been reduced to less than two pages.
- Full findings and recommendations have been moved to the front of the report and can serve as a separate handout or report segment.
- The body of the report has been changed to eliminate jargon and is written in a more educational voice, targeted towards the agency manager that knows nothing about the subject.

Hoenicke reported that the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) share the vision of the white paper. The head of OPR is working on what the governance structure of a federated data system might look like. The California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) would be the skeleton for building this federated data system.

Atwater

- The recommendation summary is too brief.
- Seems sparse in the way of pictures that would help the reader visualize who the main players are, what are the current data repositories and why don't they serve people's needs?

Collier

- Doesn't believe that the two bullets in the ES will entice agency managers to read the full report.
- Noted that the attempt to reduce jargon is appreciated but this is still geared towards the technical person if terminology like "virtualized unity" is used. Suggested having at least the ES and recommendations read by a lay-person for comprehension.

- Suggested kick-starting the process of implementation by expanding the “work-ahead” section to include resources needed. What does the budget or structure look like?
- Suggested that people will have to react more strongly if the Data Summit white paper specifically calls out a recommended model that the Delta federated system would follow (see Canuel’s examples in her comments, below).

Wiens

- Most of the ES is background and not hard-hitting. He suggests structuring the ES so that there is a simple problem statement up front, followed by some findings and a solution (no background is needed in the ES).
- Change the ES to a problem-solution type structure because that’s what policy makers, legislators and agency managers will recognize and respond to better.
- Further reduce the jargon so that a non-conversant person can readily grasp and be excited about this.

Fernando

- Think about the structure and mechanics of this federated system and how you are going to make this available to people, and who are the stakeholders?
- A framework describing how people can access the federated system would be a step forward.
- Acknowledge the budget and centralization issues so that people know you are aware of the challenges ahead.
- Suggested asking for a presentation from a data division employee of the National Center for Atmospheric Research, since they are the caretakers of large datasets that house standard meteorological measurements. They can explain how this complex task is being handled and made available to others.

Lund

- Ruthlessly eliminate all jargon from the ES of this report.

Canuel

- Consider previous work from other groups as models for this effort. Examples include National Science Foundation’s Long Term Ecological Research network (<http://www.lternet.edu/>), the National Estuarine Research Reserve (<http://www.nerrs.noaa.gov/>), the Community Sediment Transport Modeling System (<http://woodshole.er.usgs.gov/project-pages/sediment-transport/>), and the Regional Ocean Modeling System (<http://www.myroms.org/>), a well-utilized, community-based framework.

Decision: The group decided that a unified response would be best and doesn’t need to be onerous.

Action: Individual board members send any additional comments to Collier, Fernando and Lund by April 17, 2015. Collier will take the lead on preparing a draft Board response and that draft will be vetted through Lund and Fernando. Collier will send the final version, without further review or comment from the Board, to DSP staff by April 27, 2015. Substantive conflicts between the opinions of Board members may warrant additional time to process the combined response.

7. Draft Report, Fishes and Flows in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta: Strategic Science Needs (Brandt)

Judy Meyer, former ISB member and co-author of the Fish and Flows report, called into the meeting for this agenda item. Lund provided a summary of the report. This report is not about individual findings and correlations of fish and flow, it has a higher-level view of the topic and focus' on strategic science needs, and the organization and effectiveness of the science. The major finding of this report is that the ISB is suggesting a change in direction of the scientific effort of fish and flows. The scientific effort needs guiding and organizing principles and the ISB is suggesting a more mechanistic view of the relationships between fish and flows will increase insight for management decisions and provide better direction for scientific advances. Recommendations from ISB members for further consideration at the May teleconference meeting:

Wiens

- The Executive Summary needs to be shorter and more exciting.
- The arrangement of the report didn't seem logical. He suggested starting with background, then taking a minimalist approach by discussing what we *need* to know in order to manage the Delta more successfully? He cautions about taking a mechanistic approach because that could lead to asking what you would *like* to know....which is a much longer, potentially esoteric, list of less relevant items that may not address tangible needs.
- There needs to be some sort of assessment about what is currently being done by the agencies to help identify knowledge gaps. It could be short and generic and not necessarily naming agencies; rather blanket statements that set the stage for determining what is not getting done that needs to be.
- Could the report be structured around a basic set of questions that would resonate with policy and decision makers?
- What doesn't come across clearly is what (of what we don't know) will be useful to managers.

Lund explained that he doesn't want to spend much time on what the agencies are doing if ultimately the suggestion is to move the agencies towards doing things differently. He feels it is not the role of the ISB or DSP to tell the agencies what they should do, but perhaps the ISB could be responsible for developing guidelines that agencies could use to evaluate what could be done differently.

Atwater

- Although the distilled summary is very helpful, Atwater wanted to be more convinced of the recommended actions and a short statement justifying each of the recommendations would be helpful.
- From the perspective of a researcher working on fish and flows, he would want to see some recognition of his efforts and instead felt the tone may be perceived as arrogant.

Canuel

- Suggested making recommendations for increasing infrastructure that brings groups of people together, such as modelers and fish biologists.

Norgaard

- Suggested looking at the issues from the perspective of a flow manager instead of a fish biologist and wonders if starting from flows (i.e. what we can control with respect to flows) will help direct the questions better than looking at the report from the perspective of gaps in our knowledge about fisheries.
- Our current knowledge about the timing of exports is not addressed.

Meyer

- Likes the idea of addressing the types of work going on and questions being addressed, as opposed to which agency is conducting the work.
- Doesn't want to limit thinking to the current knobs that can be turned.

Collier's summary of ISB recommendations

- The ISB suggested that the report should contain recommendations on how to fill knowledge gaps, in addition to identifying what they are.
- Say what the knowledge gaps are, then take the next steps to specify which knowledge gaps need to be filled.
- To what extent should the ISB suggest who or how higher-priority knowledge gaps get filled?

Outcome: The Fish and flows report will be the focus of the May teleconference and the Board will discuss if a rewrite is necessary or if the document can be finalized at that time. The group is in favor of being patient and getting this correct, instead of rushing it through the process – especially if a different organizing principle is being proposed. Individual Board members and the public can submit comments to Souza by April 30, 2015.

Public comment from John Mills: Mr. Mills suggested that looking at the natural hydrograph of unimpaired streams will be helpful in determining what the natural system should look like. He added that fish will adapt and respond to the current extreme conditions, so using the natural hydrograph as a tool for investigating fish response will be key to understanding the system as a whole. Mr. Mills also encouraged the ISB to step back from an individual watershed approach in order to understand how the entire system worked in the past.

8. Update on Other Program Reviews

- **Adaptive Management (Wiens)**
Resh has shared some text that Wiens is currently adding to. They are targeting the next couple of months for having a draft to circulate. They are using the report in concert with the drought to push this forward and give it the attention it deserves.
- **Delta Levees & Delta as Place (Norgaard, Atwater)**
Atwater reported that the panel review that DSP is organizing will add structure to the Delta Levee's review. There was a request from the DSC to engage more with the staff working on the Delta Levees Investment Strategy, so that needs to be coordinated. Atwater, Wiens and Jahnava Duryea visited the Sherman and Twitchell islands yesterday with Bryan Brock (DWR) where they discussed conservation easements, carbon sequestration and rice farming. Next month, they are tentatively planning a south Delta visit to coincide with the May teleconference.

- Water Quality (Collier, Canuel)
Collier and Canuel have not been able to make much progress on this review. They are planning to start in earnest after June. At that time, they will work on collating the responses they have received.

9. Public Comment (For matters not on the agenda but within subject matter jurisdiction of the DISB.)

Joanne Vinton commented that her recollection of the DISB's public perception is very favorable so she suggests not changing things too much during the course of the self-assessment.

10. Action items, meeting outcomes and planning for the next meeting (Collier)

Action items:

- **4/15/15.** Comments from individual Board members about the high-impact science needs (see: <http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/event-detail/11802>) need to be sent to Souza by COB on 4/15/15 so they can be considered in time for inclusion in the DPIIC staff report. There will not be a collective Board response for this. Souza will send the comments to appropriate DSC staff.
- **4/17/15.** Comments about the Data Summit white paper should to be sent to Collier, Lund and Fernando by 4/17/15. Collier will combine responses, vet it through Fernando and Lund, and then send it to the DSP by 4/27/15 without further review from the Board.
- **4/20/15.** Collier and Wiens will produce a memo by 4/20/15 (original date was 4/23/15 but after the meeting, an earlier deadline was selected to allow time for staff review of the memo) conveying the ISB's support in having robust monitoring on the major actions being taken in response to the drought and utilizing the drought as an opportunity to test the effectiveness of the adaptive management process. The Board needs a better understanding of whether robust monitoring plans are already in place in order to have the correct context for this memo. This memo could then be utilized by Executive Officer Pearson or Council Chair Fiorini at the 4/23/15 Council meeting, or wherever they may feel is appropriate.
- **4/30/15.** Public comments and comments from individual Board members on the draft Fish and Flows report will be accepted until 4/30/15. Send comments to Souza and she will compile and redistribute them to the entire Board. Comments will be assessed to determine whether the report is ready to be finalized or if another reworking/redraft is necessary. That decision will be made during the 5/12/15 teleconference.
- Staff will receive clarification about ISB term renewal since the statute language is not entirely clear whether members need to be formally reappointed by the Council or if the terms renew automatically.

Update: At a 4/12/15 Executive Staff Meeting, Lauren learned that the reappointment process is formal. Staff will begin the process of getting this item on an upcoming Council agenda.

- Staff will receive clarification about whether there is any flexibility to incorporate a private portion into the June meeting so the Board can discuss personnel issues related to their effectiveness, efficiency and business practices.
Update: After consulting with legal staff, it has been determined that having a private session during the June self-assessment is not possible.

Meeting Outcomes

- The in-Delta meeting has been moved to October to allow for more outreach and planning. The June ISB meeting will still include a self-assessment (along with some outside perspectives) about the ISB's effectiveness. Staff will look for meeting space in June.
Update: The 2nd floor conference room is available all day on Thursday June 11, 2015. It is not available on Friday June 12, 2015.
- At the May teleconference, the Board will have a group discussion about how to proceed with the Fish and Flows report, after comments have been received by the public and individual Board members.

Next Meeting

- The May ISB meeting will be held via teleconference on **Tuesday 5/12/15 from 9 am – 11 am**. Major agenda items include comments received and next steps on the draft Fish and Flows report, and framing of the June self-assessment.