

Delta Independent Science Board Teleconference January 15, 2016

Friday January 15, 2016

**2nd Floor Conference Room, Park Tower
980 Ninth Street, Sacramento, CA**

1. Welcome and Declarations (Lund)

Present: Jay Lund (in-person); Steve Brandt, Joy Zedler, Dick Norgaard, Liz Canuel, Joe Fernando, John Wiens, Vince Resh, Brian Atwater and Tracy Collier (via telephone). There were no new conflicts of interest or changes in status made by any of the Board members.

Delta Science Program and Delta Stewardship Council staff: John Ryan, Cindy Messer, Lauren Hastings and Kelly Souza.

2. Delta ISB Chair's Report and Business Matters (Lund)

Chair Lund reported that:

- Steve Brandt will be representing the Board at the [IEP Workshop in April](#) and that there has been some thought about changing the ISB meeting date in April, to co-locate it at Lake Natoma Inn, directly preceding the IEP Workshop. The Board will make a determination on this near the end of the meeting.
- A new Science Fellow, Annie Adelson, will be joining us shortly. Staff has put together a reading list to help get her acquainted with some of the topic areas that the Board will be currently or will soon be tackling.
- Staff member Souza has moved forward the idea about a panel session (Integrating Science) at the 2016 Bay-Delta Science Conference. During the June 2015 self-assessment, many people suggested that the Board wade into this subject and Lund believes the Board is well-suited to do so.

Action: Board members should think about how this panel should be constructed and what role they may want to play.

3. Delta ISB review of the process for Delta Plan Performance Measure refinements (Collier)

The process under review was detailed in a document distributed to the Board on January 7, 2016, [Process for Refinement and Update of Delta Plan Performance Measures](#). Atwater, Brandt, Collier and Zedler will be drafting the review response. They performed a quick evaluation of the report, and determined it was adequate for Board review. The intent today is to have a discussion that will help inform the review authors, who intend to circulate a first draft to individual Board members no later than January 22, 2016. The Board will target February 4, 2016 for posting the draft review to the web, and tentatively take action to finalize the document at its February meeting.

Collier summarized the comments received thus far and indicated that the Board generally likes the document and thinks it's good, despite some members not being very interested in the process per se but more interested in the validity of the performance measures. The objective of the review is to see if the process is well-documented and technically sound.

Fernando agreed that the document is good but has questions about terminology that he will send to Collier later today.

Canuel reported that she thought it was thorough and detailed and she doesn't have any comments about the process.

Norgaard commented that the process document refers to water reliability and restoration, but not Delta as Place. Atwater adds that the Delta Plan contains both output and outcome performance measures for Delta as Place, which would make them (by proxy) within the scope of this process review. Council Staff, Cindy Messer, clarified that performance measures specifically related to Delta as a Place may not have been explicitly identified in the document transmitted to the Delta ISB, but there are a healthy number of these performance measures in the Delta Plan.

Brandt agrees with all that has been said and adds that the Board needs to think about this from two perspectives; 1) what was the process itself and 2) how well is the process described? He finds the individual chapter tables very instructive and asked for clarification about a table submitted to the Board during its December meeting ([example here](#)). Specifically, Brandt asked if the column on the far right-hand side, 'Performance Measure Components' are all new measures or if there is an older version that is being improved upon (i.e. is that far right-hand column what was derived by the process?). Messer concurred with Brandt's assessment and added that developing the metrics, targets, baselines, data sources, and other notes in that column, is a product of the refinement process. It was pointed out that the wording about metrics in the original Delta Plan was general or absent, so much of the detail (i.e. in the performance measure component category) is new. For the purposes of reviewing the process, Brandt (and Zedler underscored) thought it would be worth looking at the individual products (targets, baselines, metrics, sources) of the performance measures, since it's the end product of the process.

Zedler highlighted that one word can make or break a performance measure and cautioned the group to pay close attention to the criteria and the standard to ensure interpretation cannot be construed in different ways. Clarity is the key. She urged the group to revisit page 11 of the report given to the Delta ISB (14-day consecutive inundation) to ensure the metrics are clear.

Collier commented about the need to "continually evolve the performance measures." In his experience, after spending a long period of time rigorously selecting performance measures, it's important that you don't change them unless it's critically necessary to do so. It creates problems tracking and assessing the progress and defeats the purpose of having performance measures.

Zedler asked the Board if they shared concern about Wien's observation that the Delta Plan contains more than five times as many administrative Performance Measures as outcome Performance Measures, suggesting a greater concern for how things are being done rather than what is being accomplished. This is important since meeting an administrative measure does not ensure that relevant outcomes follow. Brandt mentioned that the scope of the process review does not contain administrative measures, only output and outcome measures. Atwater added that the administrative measures are not trivial, and highlights that the entire Delta Levees Investment Strategy (DLIS) is administrative performance measures. Messer clarified that most are administrative, but there are a few output and outcome measures for the DLIS.

Action: Zedler (lead), Brandt, Atwater and Collier will draft a first response by Friday January 22, 2016. Souza will distribute that draft to individual Board members. Board members return comments to Souza no later than Thursday January 28, 2016.

Outcome: Lund anticipates being able to vote on the final version of the review response on February 11 or 12, 2016.

Lund and Collier asked Council staff if there were any areas they want the Board to pay particular attention to. John Ryan highlighted knowing whether staff applied enough rigor to the process.

4. Adaptive Management Program Review (Wiens, Resh, Collier, Lund)

Is there consensus that the report has reached a final version? If so, what steps should we identify for finalizing the document (same format as the Flows and Fishes report?)

Wiens reported that he feels the Board has long ago reached the point of diminishing returns on the report. He's incorporated comments from several Board members. The main changes he has made have to do with

recommendations. Wiens has removed recommendation 4 (conducting an economic analysis of cost benefit) and relocated it into 'Next Steps'. The recommendation about reconsidering or revising the mandate to use adaptive management in the Delta generated some concern as some construed this as the Delta ISB wading too closely to policy issues. Previous recommendations 9 (recognize where adaptive management is not important) and 10 (reconsider mandate of adaptive management) have now been consolidated. Wiens feels the spirit of the recommendations have been retained, but perhaps without the baggage. Wiens is willing to consider further changes, ranging from word-smithing to substantive, but he feels the report is ready to be finalized. Norgaard moved to approve this version of the adaptive management report as final, contingent upon any editorial improvements that arise and are delegated to Wiens.

Public comment (Tom Zuckerman):

- The Table of Contents needs to be updated.
- Have the governance issues been addressed? In previous versions, there was concern that the process was going to be governed by the wrong group of people.

Lund clarified that this document is about the use of adaptive management Delta-wide, and not related to any specific project, such as California WaterFix. Wiens adds that the governance issue is addressed in the first recommendation, by highlighting the need for a broad-reaching, oversight vehicle or group to guide adaptive management in the Delta. The Board did not propose specifics of what this entity might look like; rather it is suggesting that the Council convene a workshop to help develop this team. Collier adds that the current wording of the recommendation is far less prescriptive than previous versions.

Lund restated the motion, which was seconded by Atwater. All Board members voted in favor.

Action: Wiens will send Souza the final version on January 19. She will work with Communications staff, to facilitate a layout similar to the Flows and Fishes report, in time for the February 25, 2016 Council meeting.

Brandt reported that IEP planning staff contacted him to find out if he wanted to report about Delta ISB activities in the plenary session of the 2016 Annual Workshop on April 20. He provided a similar talk in 2015 but is suggesting that Wiens deliver the 20 minute IEP talk with the Adaptive Management review report as the focus.

Action: Wiens will confirm his availability for April 20 and follow up with Souza after the meeting.

Resh suggested that the leads of the Adaptive Management Review Report start thinking about developing a panel of names to discuss recommendation 1 (convene a workshop or review panel to determine how to coordinate and assist adaptive management in the Delta). Hastings reported that there are current discussions between the Science Program and EcoRestore, about this very recommendation, and suggested that the Board hear from Dahm about this topic at the next Delta ISB meeting, so that information can be considered while developing the next steps.

Lund suggested that more thought about outreach and post-review follow-up should be considered during the February Delta ISB meeting. Wiens added that the Board review the 'Next Steps' section of the report and determine which of those to pursue and how.

5. Status of other reviews

- Delta as an Evolving Place - Norgaard reported that there is no change in the status of the report but he expects to make progress by the February meeting.
- Water Quality – Collier reported that staff is proceeding with the process of pursuing additional technical expertise.
- Delta Levees – Atwater reported that the Board will receive a briefing from the Delta Levees Investment Strategy team in May.
- Water Supply Reliability – Lund reported that we are scheduling an informational panel presentation in February.

6. Planning for 2016 meetings (Lund)

There was consideration of rescheduling the April 14 and 15 Delta ISB meeting to April 18 and 19, in order to co-locate with the Interagency Ecological Program Annual Workshop. April availability of Board members is:

- 4/18 – Wiens, Lund, Canuel, Brandt, Zedler and Collier
- 4/19 – Wiens, Lund, Norgaard, Brandt, Zedler and Collier.
- 4/20 – 4/23 IEP Workshop – Wiens, Collier, Brandt, Zedler and possibly Lund.

There is also a [California Water Policy Conference](#) at UC Davis on April 20 and 21, 2016.

The March 17th meeting is scheduled to be a teleconference, if needed.

The April meeting will be rescheduled to the 18th and 19th. *Subsequent to this meeting, it was determined that the April meeting will only be one day on 4/19/16.*

The Board reviewed the [Master Review Table \(v1/12/16\)](#) of potential, in-progress and completed reviews. This should be considered tentative, not concrete. Lund points out that he would like to see the conversation about Delta Levees involve more of the Board in a public setting. He also likes the idea of having a panel discussion at the Bay-Delta Science Conference about organizing science across institutions and thinks some earlier discussion is a step in the right direction. Chair Lund also thinks that the Board needs to start having conversations about monitoring. Brandt asked if the Delta ISB has asked to review the final EIR/S for California WaterFix. Collier recalled that the Board felt it should look at the final EIR/S again since there were many incomplete items, asked for several times. The Board collectively felt as though they should review it at that level. Hastings added that the Council will also be interested in having the Board review the final EIR/S.

7. Meeting outcomes (Lund)

- Date, time, location and major agenda items for February 11 -12 in person meeting
 - Topics for the February meeting include a Water Supply Reliability panel, an Adaptive Management panel, and performance measure process review finalization. Wiens added that in terms of adaptive management, next steps should include meeting with people who provided early input into the report (names listed on page 64 of the report) to receive their feedback about what's in the report and how to implement it. The other moving piece is what the Council intends to do with the report recommendations. Wiens points out that any future activities or outreach by the Board needs to dovetail with those two efforts. Lund thought that if there was time at the February meeting, this could be included.
Action: Souza and Hastings will coordinate with Wiens to obtain a list of people the Board would like to hear from during the February ISB meeting. The intent would be to receive feedback about what's in the report and how to implement the report recommendations.
 - Atwater asked the Board to consider using some time during the February meeting to better understand how the performance measure process was used to develop or refine an example measure. We need to focus the conversation on the process and not the details of a specific measure.
Action: Science staff will coordinate with the Performance Measure staff about presenting an example of how the process was used to refine or develop a measure, at the February ISB meeting.
 - Collier asked if the Board will be expected to review performance measures in the future. Hastings understands that the Performance Measure unit will be looking for direction to move forward on implementing the suite of performance measures developed using this process, but the Board probably wouldn't be asked for their input immediately.

8. Public comment for items not on the agenda

There was no public comment.