

AGENDA
Scientific Advisor Panel Meeting
August 28, 2018
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 pm
USFWS Office
1080 Gunpowder Pt. San Diego

Introductions 10:00 am – 10:15 am

10:15 – 11:00 pm

1. Neutral Third-Party Review Topics 10:15 am – 11:00 pm (Science Advisory Panel)
 - a. Recap the Scientific Advisor Panel for Neutral Third-Party Topics (SAP, RWQCB, & Poseidon)

11:00 pm – 12:00 pm

2. Otay River Estuary Restoration Project Update 11:00 pm – 12:00 pm (Stan Williams, Andy Yuen)
 - a. Project Description Update
 - i. Temporary Berm
 - b. MLMP Matrix
 - i. Reference Sites
 - ii. Marine Life Monitoring Plan (MMP)

Lunch 12:00 pm – 12:45 pm

12:45 pm - 3:00 pm

3. Sweetwater Marsh Tour
4. Close out comments 2:30 pm -3:00 pm (SAP, CCC, RWQCB, USFW & Poseidon)

Poseidon Otoy River Estuary Restoration Project

WETLAND MONITORING ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Issue	Existing Approach	Revised Approach	Reason for recommendation
Performance Standards			
Habitat area	Not based on success in achieving topographic criteria.	Return to original standard that is topographically based	Using vegetation coverage as both an absolute and relative standard results in double counting.
Credit determination	All absolute standards must be successful and more relative standards than lowest performing reference site	Revise standards to allow for partial credit that can be used to reduce the length of time of full monitoring	Current standards are too rigorous, especially in the initial phases of the project when systems are evolving. The relative standards are compared to natural marsh systems that have been functioning for decades or even hundreds of years. Expectation of performance of restored marshes is too great.
Monitoring time frame	Monitoring is initiated immediately after project completed	Limited performance monitoring with no monitoring of reference sites in first four years.	Doesn't make sense to monitor reference sites in the first several years or the restoration sites on certain criteria if they are not going to be successful because of the young age of the restoration site.
Time duration for monitoring criteria that are successful	All criteria must be monitored each year when any one is not met.	If a standard, either absolute or relative is met for three years* in a row, it should be eliminated from the regular monitoring while the other standards that have not been met are monitored. In other words, successful criteria don't have to be monitored annually.	This will allow for reduced monitoring when success is achieved and it has a low probability of subsequent failure. Other standards would be monitored that are not being met and once they are met, reduced monitoring of all could occur.

Issue	Existing Approach	Revised Approach	Reason for recommendation
Allow for partial credit for unexpected habitat benefits	No benefit is given if the site provides habitat for eelgrass or nesting birds, or unique fish communities over and above the reference sites.	Add a caveat that additional credits or benefits can count for situations when other standards are not being met.	This would allow for eelgrass or nesting bird habitat that is performing extraordinarily well can be recognized in a formal way.
Monitoring Methods			
Habitat area	Monitoring by 10x10 m grids in a regular placement over the site	Use a digitized approach to monitoring vegetative cover that also reflects differences	Current method is too coarse and includes a number of habitat areas within the 10m x 10m area. Digitized approach to monitoring habitat areas, especially vegetative cover, will provide more accurate determination.
Tidal exchange	Measurement of tidal prism (or volume)	Measurement of tidal range.	Tidal range is more operative for these systems. Tidal prism used for San Dieguito as a measure of the ability to keep the inlet open but that metric is not needed for ORERP.
Water quality	Dissolved oxygen level	Referenced to south San Diego Bay conditions	May be lower DO in south San Diego Bay then open coast wetlands
Reference wetland relative standards	Performance of each criterion reported as average; if criterion below average of least performing wetland, no credit is given	Performance of each criterion to be reported as average and range of 2 standard deviation; if criterion is within the range of the least performing wetland, credit should be given.	Allows for the natural variability that occurs in wetland systems to be considered when achieving credit. Current method dings restoration site even if it is not statistically different from the least performing reference site.
Stability in monitoring methodology	Monitoring methods are within the purview of the SAP and CCC contractors only	Engage applicant on the development and/or changes in the methodology and in the interpretation of the data	Allows for more input on the relative merits of changing the methodologies and allows for knowledge from other scientists with experience elsewhere to add information useful to the monitoring process. Also provides a check on any biases related to whom is conducting and/ funding the analyses.
Reference Sites			

Issue	Existing Approach	Revised Approach	Reason for recommendation
Reference sites	Current reference sites are TJE, CSM, and Mugu	Maintain reference site system as is	Cost prohibitive to add additional reference sites

*David suggests that parameters need be met only 1 year to be considered successful. He asks "What is the scientific basis for 3 years?" I would guess that it has to do with statistics but don't know if you want to go down this road as I don't think the SAP will give on this and we have to monitor for a minimum of 30 years anyway - CN.