

**CWP San Joaquin Regional Workshop Summary**  
**Merced, CA – May 7, 2009**

**OVERVIEW**

The 2009 Regional Workshops for the California Water Plan featured the Public Review Draft of the Highlights document, as well as an overview of current conditions for the respective hydrologic region or area of special interest. Each workshop also included a presentation on the scenario planning approach used to consider future uncertainty for water management. In the agenda, several hours were dedicated to small group review and comment of the draft Highlights and Regional Report for that region or area. Based on suggestions made during the 2007 and 2008 workshops, time was also provided for updates on related planning processes.

A workshop for the San Joaquin River hydrologic region was held on May 7, 2009 in Merced, CA. Copies of the workshop presentations, handouts, and materials are available on the Water Plan website at [www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials](http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials). A brief recap of the presentations is provided in the following paragraphs and the remainder of this document provides a summary of the small group discussions. Flip charts and worksheets were used to record ideas generated during the discussions and transcripts of the recorded results are incorporated into the summary.

Paul Dabbs, Project Manager for Update 2009, made the first presentation and outlined the planning process and status of major 2009 Update activities, culminating in the release of the Public Review Draft. Paul described the sections of the Highlights booklet, which serves as an Executive Summary for Update 2009. The Highlights begins with a description of existing water conditions in California that require urgent attention and response. The following pages outline the range and variation in water resources throughout the State.

The Highlights also discusses Climate Change and the existing framework for Integrated Water Management, which links to the Resource Management Strategies outlined in Volume Two and Regional Management Strategies provided in Volume 3. Other features of the Highlights include a discussion on scenarios and a fold-out section describing the Strategic Plan for Update 2009, including key objectives. The concluding recommendations represent “policies, strategies, and approaches that will help reduce and remove impediments, and leverage resources and opportunities” to implement Water Plans goals, objectives, and related actions.

In the second presentation, Brian Smith, with the San Joaquin District for the Department of Water Resources, reviewed the key characteristics of the San Joaquin River hydrologic region. The overview included items contained in the Regional Report, with special focus on local and regional issues, and management and planning activities. Paul Dabbs presented a third focus on the scenario approach being developed for future water planning. Work is currently underway to quantify potential water demands, with a subsequent phase to evaluate water resource management strategies.

Workshop attendees reviewed, discussed, and provided suggestions for each section, as recorded on the following pages. The agenda ended with several updates on related statewide water and planning initiatives: Kassy Chauhan with the California Department of Public Health described the department’s Drinking Water Program, and Mandy Vance spoke about the Sierra Nevada Conservancy’s programs.

**CWP San Joaquin Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts  
Merced, CA – May 7, 2009**

**Discussion A – Public Review Draft: Highlights and Table of Contents**

- Provide a description of the role of the water plan
  - expand the section on governance
  - add role of federal government and funding
  - strengthen “disclaimer” about water plan as a policy document
    - why use
    - who uses
    - what it does not do
- What are the benefits for investing in Updates of the Water Plan?
  - has been used to guide State water policy – connections are getting stronger
  - resource for local land use jurisdictions to certify for water needs; determining regional water supplies
  - requiring action to be implemented would trigger CEQA
- flag the concept of self-sufficiency even more
- provide further discussion on environmental and ecosystem needs and challenges
- like the boxes referencing other materials (similar to links)
- is data available to be extracted – to use as inputs for local modeling? (provide links to other databases)
- laid out well, good synopsis of big picture; does what it needs to – as a summary and reference guide
- Point to where the discussion on Water Rights occurs:
  - system is overallocated
  - quantify existing water rights (appropriative and riparian)
  - quantify applications already on file
  - rights set up expectations that this is what the system should deliver
  - include a recommendation to document that
- discuss current litigation more
- what future constraints and regulations are expected that will impact our supplies?
- give careful attention to numbers displayed in tables – tie those numbers to the charts
- page 8, climate change:
  - decrease in runoff due to both decreased precipitation and increased evapo-transpiration
  - according to USGS, southwest US will have more extreme droughts
- energy use for developing water sources will increase in future, costs will increase
- page 9, add: salinity from the Delta is moved to and through other regions by the State Water Project and Central Valley Project
- page 11, box on sustainability:
  - how does this relate to objective #13 (page 10d) and the concept of equity
  - equity = fairness, access to funding; provide context for where equity applies
- need to stress the importance of groundwater for sustainability
  - increased use with increased demand and consequences
  - subsidence
  - impacts of overdraft on down-gradient users
- Page 12, scenarios:
  - Use of “blueprint” for scenario title is confusing. Implies a tie to actual blueprint process. A turnoff.
  - expansive growth description: last two sentences are objectionable – needs a rewrite.
- Page 14: rearrange RMS to highlight “functions”
- Page 14, RMS table: system reoperation can achieve many of the benefits.

**CWP San Joaquin Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts  
Merced, CA – May 7, 2009**

- Recommendations:
  - 2, 7, and 9 are the nexus between what we ought to do and how to finance it; need a financing plan – run financial models and explain why we need it.
  - #3 (public trust): delete the words “whenever feasible” – public trust should be given full consideration at all times
- maps:
  - need better consistency with our GIS/region maps
  - colors are hard to distinguish on map – need better system to show areas (e.g. different colors; cross-hatch)
  - include the exploded (inter-relationship) region map

**Discussion B – Regional Report (Issues)**

- page 7-26, middle of the page: reword the MAGPI challenge; MAGPI is not the challenge, it's attempting to address challenges – quantifying groundwater, water quality issues, etc. are the challenges
- page 7-26: build in additional flexibility in Kings and San Joaquin river operations during flood/highwater periods
- need solutions to these challenges → IRWM plans/projects
- individual IRWMs may not address the entire hydrologic region (another challenge)
- challenges should be numbered (or alpha) so we can discuss them easier
- page 7-11: salinity – need to check and reference the “995,000 tons of salt” number: CWI or Regional Water Board?
  - SWP and CVP projects export salt to other regions
- demographics, use multiple sources – not just DOF (e.g. Census)
- page 7-9, groundwater:
  - capture sub-regional variation of groundwater supplies (e.g. in Madera area)
  - prior to Friant Canal, depth to groundwater was 8' in Madera area; Mellon Lake decreased surface flows – affecting groundwater levels; depth of municipal wells now at 425'
  - withdrawals from lower aquifers leads to subsidence in aquifer – due to a clay cap, this subsidence prevents aquifer from recovering from overdraft
  - increased demand leads to groundwater overdraft, and reduced natural recharge and results in permanent depletions of groundwater and potential subsidence (see immediately previous comment) – more than instability of surface supplies (what does that mean? sounds like diverted water)
  - more aggressive groundwater management and recharge – additional surface water supplies help but don't address need for groundwater management (and fore efficient use of groundwater)
  - recharge of groundwater basin – there is a pilot study by Merced Irrigation District, northwest of Wintun, for recharge from irrigation surface water return flows
  - changes in surface water regulations (e.g. arsenic) often motivates groundwater use
- highlight/describe connections between land use and water conditions
- stormwater/wastewater capture and reuse should be emphasized for increasing water supply
- for recycling and reuse
  - talk about role of Water Boards
  - tool for greater self-sufficiency

**CWP San Joaquin Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts  
Merced, CA – May 7, 2009**

- page 7-2, ecosystems:
  - identify source of data for wetlands (how many acres, actual loss – question the 5% figure); add more description on upper watershed
  - describe different wetland types; also wetland floodplain issues
- page 7-2: land use should include recreation:
  - recreational use of reservoir facilities
  - many valley recreation areas are water-related
- page 7-3: identify sources of data (i.e. DOF) and indicate variability: why assume growth? is a bias
- page 7-4: disaggregate rangeland from agriculture
- page 7-6, second paragraph: say less about smelt, more about salmon and salmonids
- page 7-6, environmental water:
  - “environmental water” is a false separation; see so-called biological opinion and “restoration” needs – this needs to be rewritten for tone (e.g. errors of the past and catching up for more holistic approach – see second paragraph on page 7-6 as good model)
  - add ecosystem services from San Joaquin River
  - change “judge ruled” to Federal law, Wanger
  - add public trust
- pages 7-8 and 7-9, groundwater:
  - more studies are needed on fractured rock groundwater
  - discussion is too thick on overdraft of groundwater
  - add: lack of groundwater regulations and data – including connection to surface flows
  - groundwater impacts (issues) regarding environmental water include
    - location where rivers are gaining rivers with cool base flow (keeps moving upstream)
- what is “maximum” water available? see UWMP
- page 7-10, water uses:
  - add foothill uses in Madera County (what’s the status of the study?)
  - update: Turlock Irrigation District information is outdated; TID is working on creating a consortium with the communities that it serves
  - statements seem to ramble
- page 7-11, water quality:
  - add water temperature
  - describe contamination

**Discussion B: Regional Reports (Management, Planning)**

- for management strategies, look at costs and benefits of projects to think about value of investments
- narrative on page 20 doesn’t set up the table

**Discussion C – Scenarios**

- Why not include a “no growth” scenario?
- be careful about how this is presented – that it is a modeling approach that allows consideration of potential future demand and potential benefits that could be realized from resource management strategies
- baselines should not be presented as zero (need to know where starting from) **OR** show quantity of increase as a percentage as well (both number and percentage) – otherwise there is no way to understand the scale of the results

**CWP San Joaquin Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts  
Merced, CA – May 7, 2009**

- on slide presentation: Blueprint growth line should be another color (can't see)
- at the regional level, will scenario account for agriculture take into account:
  - urbanization along Highway 99, where high quality ag lands are being urbanized?
  - that in the eastern foothills, pastureland is being converted to permanent crops? for example – 5,000 acres between Chowchilla and Mariposa Creek involved in ag-to-ag conversion; now is irrigated land
  - that the likely result of agriculture moving into sub-prime lands will be increased water demands? (this is an important statewide trend)
  - that for eva-transpiration, this is zone 16 – instead of 13
- need clearer implications of the demand on the system for environmental water and instream flow requirements (break out consumptive v. applied v. net uses); in a closed system, increase environmental uses will increase overall demand (not necessarily so when reuse is factored in)
- are changes in cropping patterns being looked at as a possible result of climate change? will ag be forced out in some areas? (this would be important for the climate scenarios)

**Other Comments**

- Volume 1, Chapter 3: describe IRWM programs, including:
  - standards and regulations for IRWMPs
  - guidelines for Prop 84 funding (Prop 50 did not define elements of what IRWM should include
  - update on, and timing of, regional acceptance process
  - there is a generational aspect to IRWM, in terms of planning v. implementation
- Volume 2:
  - Ag Stewardship: spell out “rangeland” (rangeland should be differentiated from agriculture)

**Attendance**

Lynne Baumgras, AMEC Geomatrix  
Pam Buford, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Jason Carkeet, Turlock Irrigation District  
Kassy Chauhan, Ca. Dept. of Public Health Drinking Water Program  
Gerardo Dominguez, San Joaquin County Public Works  
Bill Hatch, San Joaquin Valley Conservancy  
Steve Haze, Upper San Joaquin River Watershed Program  
Reggie Hill, Lower San Joaquin Levee District  
Carl Janzen, Madera Irrigation District  
Kevin King, Oakdale Irrigation District  
Maureen McCorry, San Joaquin Et Al  
Ed McIntyre, Madera County Water Advisory Commission  
Lydia Miller, San Joaquin Raptor/Wildlife Rescue Center  
Leona Montalvo, Madera County Planning Department  
David Robinson, Merced County Department of Agriculture  
John Shelton, Ca. Dept. of Fish and Game  
Tom Stephens, Merced Irrigation District  
Douglas Welch, Chowchilla Irrigation District  
Frank Ploof  
Mandy Vancy, Sierra Nevada Conservancy

**CWP San Joaquin Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts  
Merced, CA – May 7, 2009**

Paul Dabbs, DWR, Water Plan Project Manager  
Brian Smith, DWR, San Joaquin District  
Abby Carevic, DWR, San Joaquin District  
Chris Montoya, DWR, San Joaquin District  
Elizabeth Patterson, DWR, San Joaquin District  
Shakouri Holam, DWR, San Joaquin District  
Ernie Taylor, DWR, San Joaquin District Regional Coordinator  
Judie Talbot, Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS