

Planning Group Meeting Summary

Held: November 16, 2018

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

Meeting in Brief

The Monterey County Water Resource Agency (Agency) convened the third collaborative Planning Group meeting to develop the Salinas River Long-Term Management Plan (LTMP).

The LTMP Project Team provided an update on LTMP development. Planning Group members indicated they desire an opportunity to provide input on the full draft LTMP before the Agency finalizes the document. The Planning Group decided to revisit creating a stakeholder's statement towards the end of the LTMP development process.

Attendees shared input on the draft memo for groundwater planning and LTMP integration, often noting the need for flexibility to coordinate concurrent sustainable groundwater and LTMP planning efforts.

The Planning Group reviewed the draft LTMP management considerations and recommended the document outline pathways to resolve the LTMP implementation challenges. A working group will meet on December 5th to further discuss implementation.

[Post Meeting Note]: The Planning Group will next meet January 25. A public workshop will occur on February 7, 4:00-6:00

Action Items

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|-----------------|----------|--|
| Planning Group | Nov 30 | Send additional comments on the Draft LTMP Management Considerations Memo [view] to the Consultant Team or Agency LTMP Project Staff. |
| Consultant Team | December | Integrate the objectives and actions previously developed with the management considerations, aligning solutions with planning challenges and identifying gaps in management actions and objectives to address management considerations |
| Project Team | Ongoing | Post meeting dates for upcoming meetings. |

General Updates

- The LTMP development may be extended beyond February 2019. The California Department of Finance first needs to approve the time extension for the State Coastal Conservancy grant that funds the LTMP development effort.
- CBI developed a [Communications and Engagement Plan](#) that summarizes the engagement and outreach activities for the LTMP development process.
- Interested parties are encouraged to visit the new Salinas River Management Program website: www.salinasrivermanagementprogram.org

LTMP Development

Document Development Update

Kathryn Gaffney, ICF and LTMP consultant team lead, provided a status update on development of the LTMP document. Draft Chapters 1-3 (context / background and historical and current conditions) are complete and undergoing Agency review and revisions by the consultant team. Chapters 4-6 (management considerations and data gaps, objectives and actions, and implementation recommendations) are underway; much of which has been informed by the Planning Group and working groups' discussions.

Stakeholders Statement

(View draft [Stakeholder's Statement](#).)

Per discussion at the September 14th meeting, Planning Group member Tim Frahm, with input from other Planning Group members, drafted a stakeholder's statement to succinctly convey what the Planning Group aims to achieve together across multiple stakeholder interests.

The group saw value in the statement with minor, yet important, edits. However, the group thought the statement was premature at this point in the process because the statement includes support of the LTMP document which they have not yet reviewed. Planning Group members underscored their commitment to the collaborative LTMP development process, evident by their attendance and participation, and suggested that the statement could be updated to reflect support of the process.

The group also discussed revising the language related to fish "recovery." A suggestion was made to revise that text to say "conservation" instead.

Document Review

Several Planning Group members indicated they desire an opportunity to provide input on the full draft LTMP before the Agency finalizes the LTMP document. Review of the complete LTMP would be critical for the Planning Group to be able to support the stakeholder's statement as currently written (the statement includes support for the LTMP document). Agency LTMP project team members stated the Agency plans to hold a public workshop in late January / early

February and present the LTMP content in an accessible way. However, it would be challenging to incorporate a public comment period given the condensed timeline per the terms of the State Coastal Conservancy grant. Elizabeth Krafft, Agency LTMP project lead, added that she sees the LTMP as a living document with opportunities for revisions in the future. A Planning Group member suggested calling the document a “report” rather than a “plan.” It was also suggested that if the Planning Group does not have the opportunity for review of the complete LTMP before the current development process is concluded, then the stakeholder’s statement could be updated to state support for the LTMP development process, as opposed to the plan itself.

Management Objectives and Actions | Lagoon Management and Stream Maintenance *(Refer to updated management objectives and actions for [Lagoon Management](#) and [Stream Maintenance](#).)*

The LTMP management objectives and actions for lagoon management and stream maintenance were updated per input received at the last Planning Group meeting. A Planning Group member requested using a different word for “control” in Actions LAG-33 and LAG-35. Another member encouraged checking the LTMP aligns with applicable US Fish and Wildlife Service management plans.

A Planning Group member questioned whether the stream maintenance objectives or actions include sediment management. Kathryn responded that it had not been suggested specifically during the stream maintenance working group meeting as an objective or action; however, it is an issue noted in the LTMP management considerations.

Next Steps

The Planning Group will revisit the Stakeholder’s Statement towards the end of the LTMP development process.

The Lagoon Management Working Group will meet on December 5th to review the updated objectives and actions.

LTMP Alignment with Sustainable Groundwater Planning

(View draft [Sustainable Groundwater Planning memo](#).)

The Groundwater Working Group, consisting primarily of the LTMP project team and consultants and representatives from three groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) in the Salinas Valley Basin, met in early October to coordinate development of the LTMP and groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs).

Working group members noted the challenges to specifically outline steps for aligning development of GSPs and the LTMP, as both are moving forward concurrently. The group

underscored the importance for planning to be flexible and adaptive as new information becomes available and integrated across GSPs and the LTMP.

Several Planning Group members raised concerns regarding equitable financing. The group discussed the need to balance human and wildlife's right to clean water and the cost burden on those who will likely finance the management actions identified in the LTMP.

Planning Group members also provided the following input on the memo summarizing the context for Salinas Valley groundwater management and potential LTMP integration:

- Page 12 of meeting packet: State that natural runoff "helps provide" recharge. In some areas, the aquifers might fully recharge when rain is plentiful, but that may not occur throughout the Salinas Valley.
- Further explain the relationships among the major related policies / plans: Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and GSPs, habitat conservation plans (HCPs), and the LTMP.
- Combine the first two objectives related to using the GSPs as a mechanism for meeting water security needs and achieving sustainable groundwater management.
- Include "programs" with "projects" where appropriate.
- Add another objective for other planning processes to consider / help support LTMP implementation.
- Add another action that includes potential management activities that are different from projects (e.g., conservation).

The Planning Group found the draft Salinas Valley Water Management Conceptual Model diagram useful, but difficult to fully process all the information. Several participants suggested simplifying the diagram for a broader audience. Members offered additional suggestions:

- Create two different conceptual models: one for the general public, another one for those more familiar with the various management efforts.
- Add rain clouds.
- Consider diagramming the vertical component of seawater intrusion.
- Consider diagramming well pumping further up in the valley.
- Indicate that groundwater recharge to the deeper aquifer is less substantial than diagrammed.

LTMP Management Considerations

(View draft LTMP [Management Considerations memo.](#))

The management considerations memo consolidates the issues expressed by stakeholders to date. Planning Group members conveyed the memo accurately captures the major issues; however, the document's tone overall is overly pessimistic in highlighting the LTMP challenges. The group acknowledged the importance to appropriately identify and describe these challenges, but wanted the document to also identify and encourage possible pathways to solutions. The group discussed creating a matrix that lists potential actions with the associated challenges, particularly to help identify actions with multiple benefits.

Planning Group members also recommended that there be some discussion in the LTMP about how to align the different planning efforts into a coordinated water management plan for the entire Salinas Valley. Planning Group members suggested identifying who needs to be involved in implementing actions (e.g., landowners) and how to implement those actions. Participants recommended a working group meet to further explore LTMP implementation opportunities (e.g., who might lead / be responsible for what LTMP efforts).

A few Planning Group members suggested defining baseline components of the LTMP to serve as starting points and help inform management actions (e.g., regulatory requirements to maintain fish flows).

Planning Group members can submit feedback on the management considerations memo to any of the LTMP project team members (Agency: Elizabeth Krafft and Shaunna Murray; ICF: Kathryn Gaffney; and CBI: Gina Bartlett and Stephanie Horii). LTMP project team members emphasized they particularly invite ideas on opportunities to resolve LTMP implementation challenges.

An Implementation Working Group will meet on December 5th after the Lagoon Management Working Group meeting.

Next Steps

The LTMP project team integrate the objectives and actions previously developed with the management considerations, aligning solutions with planning challenges and identifying gaps in management actions and objectives to address management considerations.

All working group meetings are open to the public. If interested in attending a future working group meeting, contact Stephanie Horii, CBI (shorii@cbi.org).

Upcoming Meetings

Working Groups

- Lagoon Management – December 5, 1:00-3:00
- LTMP Implementation – December 5, 3:00-5:00

Planning Group

- January 25, 9:30-12:00

Public Workshop

- February 7, 4:00-6:00

Meeting Materials

- [November 16 Meeting Packet](#)