
State Water Resources Control Board

NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP

METHOD TO DEVELOP FLOW CRITERIA FOR PRIORITY TRIBUTARIES TO THE BAY-DELTA

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 – 9:00 a.m.
Joe Serna Jr. – Cal/EPA Headquarters Building
Coastal Hearing Room
1001 I Street, Second Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will hold a public workshop to receive information and solicit public input on the Delta Stewardship Council – Delta Science Program’s (Delta Science Program) Recommendation on the Method to Develop Flow Criteria for Priority Tributaries to the San Francisco Bay/ Sacramento – San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta). This will be an information workshop only and no State Water Board action will be taken.

BACKGROUND

On July 31, 2013, the State Water Board submitted a [document](#) to the Delta Science Program to request assistance in identifying one or more scientifically defensible methods to develop flow criteria for priority tributaries to the Bay-Delta. In response, the Delta Science Program evaluated a variety of methods which could be used for this purpose, and has provided a recommendation to the State Water Board. The State Water Board plans to use the recommendation to inform the Phase 4 process of developing flow criteria and establishing flow objectives for a minimum of five priority tributaries in the Bay-Delta watershed by June 2018.

The State Water Board is conducting water quality control planning and flow-related work in the Bay-Delta watershed in four phases as outlined below. The first three phases involve developing and implementing updates to the *2006 Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary* (Bay-Delta Plan):

- Phase 1: Bay-Delta Plan review and update of the San Joaquin River Flow and Southern Delta Salinity Objectives and associated program of implementation;
- Phase 2: Comprehensive review and update of other components of the Bay-Delta Plan and associated program of implementation;
- Phase 3: Amendment of water rights and other measures to implement changes to the Bay-Delta Plan resulting from Phases 1 and 2; and

Phase 4: Development and implementation of tributary-specific policies for water quality control, including the development of flow criteria and flow objectives for priority tributaries to the Bay-Delta, with a focus on the Sacramento River watershed.

Phase 4 includes: 1) development of non-binding flow criteria; 2) development of flow objectives¹ and implementation plans; 3) development of policies that incorporate flow objectives, methods for adaptive management, and implementation plans; and 4) implementation of policies through conditioning of water rights and other measures as appropriate.

The State Water Board's current focus and the purpose of this public workshop is the methods to be used for development of non-binding flow criteria. Flow criteria, as referred to in Phase 4, provide the technical basis for the development of flow objectives, but do not have regulatory effect. Flow criteria do not consider the costs of providing this water or the competing uses for water. Flow criteria will identify the range of instream flows needed to ensure the viability of aquatic species and support fluvial processes. Flow criteria should consider the needs of each tributary's flow dependent aquatic organisms and emphasize the protection of threatened or endangered species, or species likely to become threatened or endangered in the foreseeable future.

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

The State Water Board will hold a public workshop to receive information and solicit input on the Delta Science Program's recommendation of the method that the State Water Board should use to develop flow criteria for priority tributaries to the Bay-Delta (Phase 4). State Water Board staff will present a brief overview of Phase 4, including the goals and anticipated timelines for the Phase 4 process. Dr. Cliff Dahm, the Delta Science Program's independent review committee chair, will present an overview of the recommendation and findings. The public may review and comment on the recommendation from the Delta Science Program or provide alternative recommendations of methods to develop flow criteria for priority tributaries to the Bay-Delta. To ensure a productive and efficient public workshop, the discussion will focus on the potential method(s) to develop flow criteria for priority tributaries to the Bay-Delta. The workshop discussion is not intended to focus on policy questions or implementation.

AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

Additional information on Phase 4 of the Bay-Delta effort, including a copy of the document submitted to the DSP, and a copy of the DSP's written recommendation, can be found on the Phase 4 webpage at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/flow_objectives/index.shtml

¹ Flow objectives, with regulatory effect, will be established to provide balanced protection of all applicable beneficial uses and public trust resources.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

The State Water Board encourages interested parties and persons to submit their comments in writing. Comment letters regarding the workshop topic **must be received by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, April 18, 2014**. Please send comment letters to Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board, by email at: commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov (15 megabytes, or less, in size); by fax: (916) 341-5620; or by mail, addressed to:

Jeanine Townsend,
Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Please indicate the subject line **“Comment Letter – Board Workshop: Recommendations for Developing Instream Flow Criteria for Priority Tributaries (Phase 4).”** Persons delivering hard copies of comment letters must check in with lobby security personnel, who can contact Ms. Townsend at (916) 341-5600.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

The workshop will be informal. While a quorum of the State Water Board may be present, the State Water Board will not take formal action at the workshop. There will be no sworn testimony or cross-examination of participants, but the State Water Board and its staff may ask clarifying questions. No final action will be taken until a subsequent, noticed State Water Board meeting.

The workshop is an opportunity for interested persons to provide input to the State Water Board. To ensure a productive and efficient workshop, oral comments will be limited to five (5) minutes or otherwise at the discretion of the State Water Board Chair. To ensure a productive and efficient workshop, participants with common comments are encouraged to coordinate and provide oral comments as a group. **For those wishing to organize and present comments as a group, please contact Mr. Daniel Schultz by March 12, 2014 at (916) 323-9392 to ensure that adequate time is allotted.** So that all commenters have an opportunity to participate, presentations and questions may be time-limited.

WEBCAST OF WORKSHOP

A broadcast of the meeting will be available via the Internet and can be accessed at: <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/broadcast/>.

PARKING AND ACCESSIBILITY

For directions to the Cal/EPA Building and public parking information, please refer to the following website at: <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/EPAbldg/location.htm>.

The Cal/EPA building is accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals who require special accommodations are requested to contact Ms. Michele Villados, at (916) 341-5881, at least five working days prior to the meeting. Persons with hearing or speech impairments may contact us using the California Relay Service Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (800) 735-2929 or voice line at (800) 735-2922.

Due to enhanced security precautions at the Cal/EPA Building, all visitors are required to register with security staff prior to attending any meeting. To sign in and receive a visitor's badge, visitors must go to the Visitor and Environmental Services Center, located just inside and to the left of the Cal/EPA Building's main public entrance. Depending on their destination and the building's security level, visitors may be asked to show valid picture identification. Valid picture identification can take the form of a current driver's license, military identification card, or state or federal identification card. Depending on the size and number of meetings scheduled on any given day, the security check-in could take up to 15 minutes. Please allow adequate time to sign in before being directed to the workshop.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THE WORKSHOP

Questions concerning this notice may be directed to Mr. Daniel Schultz, Senior Environmental Scientist, at (916) 323-9392 or by email at: Daniel.Schultz@waterboards.ca.gov.

February 19, 2014

Date



Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board