

Agenda Item: Item 6
Meeting Date: July 15, 2008

Lead Scientist's Report

New CALFED Lead Scientist

The Science Program is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Clifford N. Dahm as the Lead Scientist for the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. Dr. Dahm, Professor of Biology at the University of New Mexico, is an internationally-recognized expert in aquatic ecology, biogeochemistry, climatology and restoration biology. His expertise is directly applicable to issues that Delta managers and the CALFED Bay-Delta Program are grappling with today. He has worked as a science advisor to the South Florida Water Management District, helping guide ecosystem restoration programs on the Kissimmee River, and has served as a peer reviewer for setting flows and levels for healthy rivers in the Tampa Bay area. More recently, Dr. Dahm has been involved in water management and drought issues in the Southwest, addressing ammonia toxicity to fish, setting minimum flows and evaluating storage options. He also has experience managing large granting programs at the National Science Foundation. His two-year term began July 1st. More information on Dahm's appointment can be found at http://www.calwater.ca.gov/content/Documents/newsroom/08-0701_Dahm_Appointment.pdf

New IEP Lead Scientist and IEP Operations Manager

The Science Program and IEP Agencies have selected Dr. Anke Mueller-Solger as the new IEP Lead Scientist. As IEP Lead Scientist, Anke will provide scientific leadership and coordination to the IEP and work closely with the IEP Operations Manager, the IEP agency coordinators and the CALFED Science Program. She was formerly with the University of California, Davis, and has over 18 years of experience with ecological monitoring and research programs. Anke will work closely with the new IEP Operations Manager, Dr. Brenda Johnson. As IEP Operations Manager, Brenda will oversee the development of the annual IEP work plan and budget and be responsible for other day to day operations issues. She will serve as lead support staff for the IEP Coordinators, Chair of the IEP Management Team and as a member of the POD Management Team (both will have offices in the CALFED Program office in Sacramento and the FWS/DFG offices in Stockton). Anke and Brenda will be great assets in providing better coordination between the Science Program and IEP.

Scientific Coordination

1. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) has initiated formal consultation under the Endangered Species Act on their Operations Criteria and Plan (OCAP) for long term operation of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. USBR released a new multi-species Biological Assessment (BA) for OCAP on May 16, 2008; to be followed by Biological Opinions (BOs) issued by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on inland species, including delta smelt, by September 2008, and NOAA Fisheries National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on anadromous fish species by March 2008. NMFS has requested that the Science Program organize a two part review. Part one of the review, scheduled for August 5th, will focus on NMFS' analytical framework for development of the BO. Part 2 of the process will be for the same panel to review the draft BO in January 2009. The Science Program lead is Matt Nobriga.
2. The Science Program continues to provide support and advice to the Governor's Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force (Task Force). Mike Healey prepared and presented summaries of the Science Program Conveyance Modeling Workshop and Science Program Organic Carbon Workshop to the Task Force at the May 28-29 meeting. The Task Force asked Healey to provide future input on a Delta science structure. Healey has prepared draft recommendations for Science Program and ISB review and discussion.

Mike Healey will continue to serve as a Delta Vision Science Advisor and assist the Task Force through the completion of the Delta Vision Strategic Plan, including facilitation of the Delta Vision Assessment Team that is currently reviewing the Strategic Plan.

3. The revised DRMS Phase 1 report was sent Friday, July 11th, 2008 to the Independent Review Panel (IRP) for their review. The IRP is scheduled to meet in Sacramento, September 4-5 to discuss the revised Phase 1 report and prepare their written review. The review will be completed and given to the CALFED Science Program by September 26th, 2008. The Science Program lead is Ladd Lougee.
4. The Science Program is assisting the CALFED Water Quality Program and CALFED Drinking Water Quality Subcommittee in evaluating the overall adequacy of the *Draft Final Water Quality Program Stage 1 Final Assessment* for the program's first seven years of operation. Science Program staff convened an independent review panel, which completed their review on June 18, 2008. The lead reviewer, Dr. Paul Westerhoff of Arizona State University, presented a summary of the review comments to the BDPAC Water Quality Subcommittee on July 10. The final review report is expected to be posted by July 31 on the Science Program website. The Science Program lead is Barbara Marcotte.

5. A workshop titled “The Use of Artificial Propagation as a Tool for Native Fish Conservation: What We Need to Know for the Preservation of Central Valley Salmonids and Delta Smelt” is scheduled for July 24. The workshop will provide an opportunity for information exchange among scientists and managers who are already trying to use artificial propagation to preserve rare fishes elsewhere and those planning to do so locally. The Science Program lead is Matt Nobriga.

Scientific Communication

1. Mike Healey and Science Program staff are making final edits to the *State of Bay-Delta Science, 2008* Report. With the exception of one chapter, the chapter layouts are complete and are undergoing final proofing. The final chapter has been received and is being copy-edited. A few non-scientific CALFED staff have reviewed the chapters for comprehension by our target audience, Bay-Delta decision makers and managers. Final proofing and indexing are the final steps. Production and printing are expected to take at least a month. The timeline for release of the report is summer 2008. The Science Program lead is Darcy Jones.
2. The 5th Biennial CALFED Science Conference will be held at the Sacramento Convention Center on October 22-24, 2008. The title of this year’s forum is: *Global Perspectives and Regional Results: Science and Management in the Bay-Delta System*. Science Conference organizers have received a record number of 287 abstracts for oral presentations. Plenary speakers include Mary Nichols, California Air Resources Board; Cliff Dahm, CALFED Lead Scientist; Jim Cloern, USGS; Dan Schlenk, University of California, Riverside; and Amy Luers, Google.Org. For additional details please visit the conference web site: <http://www.science.calwater.ca.gov/conferences/> The Science Program lead is Rebecca Fris.
3. A new issue of the online journal *San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science* is now available. Volume 6, Issue 2 contains four research articles on topics including riparian restoration, Chinook salmon and delta smelt, splittail, wind waves, and climate change. Samuel Luoma, the new Editor in Chief, will assume responsibility for subsequent issues starting with Volume 6, Issue 3. Sam hired Lauren Buffaloe as the new Managing Editor. All articles can be downloaded at http://repositories.cdlib.org/jmie/sfews/all_issues.html The Science Program lead is Michelle Shouse.
4. The final 2008 Interagency Ecological Program Pelagic Organism Decline Work Plan (Work Plan) was completed in June 2008 and is now available. The Work Plan, developed by the IEP POD Management Team, describes the 2008 research studies and monitoring to evaluate the decline of pelagic species in the Delta and Suisun Bay and increase scientific understanding of the POD.

The CALFED Science Program coordinates with the IEP to develop and distribute the Work Plan updates and fund elements of the POD research program. This is the final 2008 IEP POD Work Plan. The Work Plan can be viewed at:

http://www.science.calwater.ca.gov/pdf/workshops/POD/IEP_POD_2008_workplan_060208.pdf The Science Program lead is Matt Nobriga.

Scientific Support

1. On May 14, Secretary Mike Chrisman approved the funding for nine Science Program supplemental proposals totaling \$2.2 million. Science Program staff are preparing modifications to the existing contracts so that they can begin their supplemental work. The funding recommendations and the proposal reviews can be viewed at:

http://www.science.calwater.ca.gov/psp/psp_package_2007.html The Science Program lead is Michelle Shouse.

2. The Science Program received over 30 applications from qualified individuals to compete for CALFED Science fellowship opportunities in 2008. Up to 12 fellowships are available for qualified graduate students and postdoctoral researchers. Fellowships must focus on one or more of the following topics for the California Bay-Delta system:

- Trends and Patterns of Habitats, Populations and System Responses to a Changing Environment
- Aquatic Invasive (Exotic) Species
- Water Supply, Water Quality
- Developing Indicators and Performance Measures

California Sea Grant administers and manages the fellowship program.

Selection of the Fellowships will occur in late July and work on the Fellowships will begin September 2008. The Science Program lead is Matt Nobriga.

Program Building

1. Science Program staff continue to work on a Science Program Strategic Plan and recently completed draft Vision, Mission and Objective statements. At a May 30 retreat, Science Program staff discussed the strategic plan and fleshed out their ideas about the future role of the Science Program within possible Delta governance options.
2. The Science Program is currently working to fill two vacancies: Research Writer and Environmental Scientist/Staff Environmental Scientist.

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